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THE
INQUISITION EXAMINED,

BY AN
IMPARTIAL REVIEWER.

By J. O'Connor



O'Connor, Thomas

"Religionis non est religionem cogere."

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SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW-YORK, ss.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the twentieth day of June, in the forty-ninth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Thomas O'Connor, of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

The Inquisition Examined, by an Impartial Reviewer. "Religionis non est religionem cogere."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States of America, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned." And also to an act, entitled, "An act, supplementary to an act, entitled, An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

JAMES DILL,

Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

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THE INQUISITION, &c.

THE subject of the following pages has engaged much of public attention : the mode of treating it, in this little volume, may appear novel ; it will be read on that account, if on no other. It is peculiarly proper, that such a work as this, should appear in the United States of America, because, here, and perhaps here only, the writer, shielded by wise and just laws, may proceed unobstructed by any authorized censorship of the press, or any *privileged* assaults of the prejudiced. The government of the United States is not chargeable, directly or indirectly, with the erection of any civil tribunal, to judge or control the consciences of men : if America continue free, she must resist the introduction of those falsehoods which have become part of an European management, having for its object, the enabling of the few to rule licentiously over the many. With the view of acting my part, on this occasion, I sit down to arrange the following matter ; I stand, herein, not the special advocate of any particular religious sect, I write in charity, the professed tenet of all, and shall carefully avoid theological controversy. Confining myself to the inculcation of what equally interests every christian, I hope to carry my reader along in good humour, and in the conviction, that I have no insidious or improper motive.

The press may be compared to a sword : it can attack, it can defend ; it can kill, it can save. It must be confessed, that while its freedom is, in a great measure, essential to human happiness, its licentiousness is impregnated with most grievous evil ; its intrinsic capability, however, to effect good, greatly

overbalances the ill it can produce, even although the strong arm of the civil magistrate should not become umpire between the aggrieved and the aggressor. We foster the press as the "palladium of our liberty"; it behooves every citizen, as he would secure to himself and his country, the advantages it offers, to use it as the best guard against the assaults which have, and may again be made, through it, on the credulity of those who can be deceived, and on the patriotism of those who may not have the lynx-eyes to discover the masked battery, whence may proceed a treacherous and dangerous explosion. The press by its power and subtlety, is too often the efficient agent in the propagation of error; it needs but to bend to its unexamined dictation, and blinded man may be led into any labyrinth however intricate, and held bound to any theory however absurd. It is the present purpose, to encounter one of the misrepresentations, to fight the enemy with the weapon he has misused, to seek an antidote in the source of the poison.

The press with its attack on the Inquisition, has coupled an attack upon divine religion, it has arraigned God and man at the same tribunal, and, of its own authority, pronounced them associates in crime. To oppose the presumption of those who would build up deism on the ruins of revealed religion, is a work worthy of an abler pen than that now employed, and to such it would be willingly resigned, but there seems little disposition among writers, to enter on a task, in which they must encounter an error which has obtained too general credence, and be possibly exposed to the resentment of those, who, without reflection or due information, hate the Inquisition, because it is popish; and hate a papist* because they

*As I do on this, and may on other occasions, use the word *papist*, in the sense familiar to writers, I think it necessary to observe, that, however I may comply with custom, I am aware that there is a distinction strictly speaking, between a *papist*,

hate the Inquisition. For my part, I expect more liberality in the reader, and that however he may continue to differ from me, he yet will see in my motive an excuse for what he may deem my misconception.

There are many writers on this subject, but they have so mingled it with other matters as to render the whole too voluminous for general perusal, or they were the productions of Catholic Ecclesiastics, and, for this reason, would not be generally read. I allude to publications fraught with candour, and not to those mischievous productions intended to poison the public morals, by instilling a hatred for religion. As the present work comes not from an ecclesiastic, as it is intended not to defend, or offend any christian sect, or yet to compare religions, it may be expected, it will meet a more favourable reception, an unprejudiced perusal, and that the world will be on the side of the writer, who professes to defend the broad and charitable truth, that REVEALED RELIGION IS NOT A SANGUINARY CODE ; and that the blood which flowed, whether in its name or not, whether in Spain, or in England, had not, in either country, the sanction of the Catholic or of the Protestant churches, but was, in fact and in truth, opposed by the tenets of both.

Inquisition, in the strict signification of the word, means neither more nor less than an *inquiry*, and, in this sense, is a harmless expression. By divesting the

and a Roman Catholic. The latter is so called because he professes the religion of the Roman Pontiff, which religion was always called Catholic, and because he acknowledges the supremacy of the Pope in *spirituals*; the former is a subject of the Pope as a *temporal* prince, and would be a papist, although he professed the Protestant religion, by the same rule that a subject of George the Fourth is not less a Briton because he is a Roman Catholic, or, if the reader will please so to call him, a Papist. The publication of this distinction, by a Catholic of Ireland, several years ago, led to the practice in all late British laws, of introducing the words "or Roman Catholic," after the words "popish" or "papist" as the same occurred in any bill on the subject of popery.

mind of any prejudice that may exist against the mere word, one obstruction to the good understanding of the subject will be removed, and the reader will be prepared to meet it, with the calmness essential to a candid examination. Johnson, in his dictionary explains the word *inquisition* to be "a judicial inquiry," in this sense, it is a part of the civil code of every well regulated society; and we will also find that there is, an inquisition properly and essentially connected with every religious community. There are inquisitions or judicial inquiries in Spain, Italy, France, England, in the United States of America, in every country where legislation is properly organized, or law rightly administered. An inquiry into transgressions against the established laws and usages of nations, is the proper duty of the civil magistrate; the authorized administrators of the affairs of the church, may also, in their respective communities, inquire into transgressions against their laws; and each may inflict punishment in proportion to the magnitude of the offence, and the proper power of the court or judge; but as the civil authorities exercise power in regard to the punishment of criminals (whether right or wrong is no question here) which cannot be resorted to by the ecclesiastical courts, so it becomes necessary for every person who reflects at all on the subject, to consider the acts of these tribunals as unconnected with each other. The appointments of clergy, Catholic as well as Protestant, in Spain as well as in England, to be counsellors of princes and kings, in the *civil* administration of the realm, have led individuals to charge to the agency of the clergy, and often rightly, those excesses which were committed against the people; and, not discriminating between the individuals who composed the body of the clergy, and the church of which they were upon earth the ministers, but forgetting that while the former being human, might be corrupt and cruel, the latter is and must always and forever continue pure, mild, and

merciful, have charged to a divine religion, those barbarous acts of civil governments, in which ministers of the church, *acting in the capacity of civil magistrates*, have been known to perform a part. The reader must be already astonished at the ignorance or infatuation which could thus jumble together, as if into chaos, the acts of weak man, with those of an all-wise God. If the reader should see, as he must, the necessity of the distinction I aim at, another essential step is gained towards a good understanding of the subject.

On generally received principles, there can be no reasonable objection to a judicial inquiry : it is not always so with the detail. The acts imputed as crimes, may be such as ought not be cognizable by a civil tribunal, the punishment may be such as could not be inflicted by an ecclesiastical court, the mode of investigating the charge may be wrong, the penalty may be excessive. Instances of some, or of all of these, may be found in every country ; while in the purest administered civil government, we find somewhat to condemn, we will discover in the worst some excellence worthy of being adopted by the best.

Among the crimes cognizable by the Spanish Inquisition, were those of magic, sorcery, soothsaying,* blasphemy, polygamy, sodomy,† disturbing the religious congregations when in church or engaged in the performance of divine worship, insulting the clergy, and not observing the Sabbath. These are also considered and treated as crimes in every country where law has a due respect for order, peace, morality or religion ; and in no country are these violations of decency, these offences against the rights of society and individuals, more expressly discountenanced than in these United States, and although the mildness of the law provides punishments less severe than those of despotic governments, yet, even here, the inconvenience arising from the enforcement of the law

has been frequently the subject of complaint, while the efforts to evade it have supplied the material for many an amusing anecdote. These and other crimes cognizable by Spanish tribunals, were undoubtedly visited by punishments barbarously excessive, and the delays of trials, as well as the modes in use to extort evidence and confession, such as good governments could not but discountenance, and the law of the church must condemn. The Spanish Inquisition no longer exists. The reader will bear in mind, as a necessary preparative to the perusal of what follows, that a Catholic prince and a Catholic army, composed the power before which the Inquisition fell; to the aversion of the Spanish Catholics, and still more to the interference of another Catholic prince (if we believe a rumour not officially authentic, and not at all denied) we are indebted for the failure of the pusillanimous Ferdinand of Spain, in his attempt to reinstate the hated tribunal.

The outcry so industriously raised in England against the Catholic religion, has had a very injurious effect on the morals of the English people, an effect from which they will not soon or easily recover. This factious outcry engendered a hatred not only of foreigners, with whom Englishmen were generally unacquainted, but also between Englishman and Englishman, it became a part of a vicious and early education of the children, and may be said to have been sucked in with the mother's milk, it "grew with their growth, and strengthened with their strength," until it became the settled tenet of the full grown man, who thus became the slave of error, so gross, so palpable, and so opposed to the mild doctrine of christianity, that future generations will not need an abandonment of the religion of their fathers, in order to conceive a surprize, that their Protestant ancestors could be so imposed upon.

Let it not be supposed that I write against Englishmen: I know nothing bad in the natural character of the Englishman: misled by the artful and the vicious

of his own nation, he is an object of compassion and sympathy ; naturally tolerant and brave, he is ingenious, industrious, and patiently persevering in what he deems right : had the national spirit not been doomed to pine beneath evil direction, we should say misdirection, of a profligate government, the names of Wilberforce, Burdett, and Brougham, these honorable advocates of rational liberty, would scarcely be distinguished among the millions of Englishmen, who would rise up advocates of UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION. The Englishman is told that he lives in an enlightened age, and that he professes a religion of toleration and liberality ; but he should know, and he must know if he at all reflects, that those who inculcate hatred of the neighbour, are neither sincere christians nor orthodox Protestants ; they are the same proud few who endeavour to keep the English mind dark, in the presence of that growth of literature and of rational liberty which God intends as a blessing to all.

The spurious charge made against the Catholic religion, that the Inquisition grew out of one of its *fundamental tenets*, was the foundation on which were erected many other misrepresentations, and was well calculated to effectuate the designs of the fabricators ; for, surely, a religion at once cruel and sanguinary, must be hated, and its votaries detested. Should the injustice of this charge be established, should this ill built foundation of error be once razed, and it is the writer's aim to raze it, the multiform superstructure must fall, or be supported by a miracle, and it may be doubted, notwithstanding the presumed credulity of Englishmen, whether such an imposition could be successfully played off in that nation, at this day. The world becomes happily more enlightened ; the force of increased knowledge must surely put an end to this war against religion, and direct it against those civil governments which commit all the crime, so unjustly alledged against God's code. It is especially desirable, that a just sentiment should govern the mind in America, and that the citizens, while shaking

off the weak or wicked habits, and corrupt or erroneous principles of the old world, should not retain for a moment the most unsocial and uncharitable of all.

The early settlers of that part of America north of Florida, came principally from England, they brought with them their prejudices, they instilled these into their children, and they into theirs, until a people destined, they or their posterity, to be the admiration of the world, became prejudiced, intolerant, and blindly bigotted, not only disposed to persecute Catholics, but to persecute each other. Many indeed are the proud instances in which the errors of early education gave way before the better understanding of philosophical inquiry and the instructions of unsophisticated piety, but persecution in every shape, direct or indirect, statutory or otherwise, must entirely cease, before republicanism can become the safeguard of the conscience, the mind must be as free from the desire as the hand from the act of oppression; and this cannot be expected, unless the heart be disposed to charity and the investigation of truth. Kings revile religion in order to gain their kingly ends; the course of republicanism is not devious, liberty of conscience is its conspicuous character, hatred of the neighbour on account of his particular religious tenet, is inconsistent with that character. We may argue, we may reason, but we can neither persecute those who differ from us, nor compel them to adopt our opinions or creed. If Americans have not fully and generally adopted this doctrine, to it they must at some time come, and the sooner the better.

The British kings and queens did little to encourage settlements in America, except by grants of land to private companies or individuals. The titles to these lands were, at that early day, not very well secured against foreign claims, and finally became troublesome, vexatious, and unprofitable to the grantees. The hostility of the aborigines, an inhospitable climate, and various other impediments, presented the most discouraging aspect, and frequently produced

the most disastrous disappointments. The project of settling the country north of Florida would have been abandoned, or deferred to a distant day, had pecuniary gain or domestic comfort been the only incitements: what nature seemed to deny, human artifice or rather human cruelty supplied. Through a mistaken or a pretended love of God, the men of Europe persecuted each other, until the worsted party was compelled to seek refuge in the uncultivated wilds of America. To persecution on account of religion more than to any other cause, may be ascribed, that the American country north of Florida contains a population of twelve millions of persons natives of Europe, or descendants of European parents. Can it be believed, future generations will totally discredit the fact, that the persecuted who fled from Europe to the wretched asylum offered by America, became the persecutors of each other. If we except the quakers of Pennsylvania, and the Catholics of Maryland, the spirit of fanaticism and of persecution for conscience sake, was too apparent throughout. This however was less prevalent in the southern than in the northern portion of this country. The tract to which the name of "New-England" was given by one of the early explorers of America, comprehending the country north-east of the Dutch colony of New-York, and bounded by the river St. Lawrence on the north, was the most remarkable for the zeal with which its inhabitants carried on the work of *holy* persecution.

The reformation in religion which commenced in Germany, in the sixteenth century, was introduced into England during the infant reign of Edward the Sixth, and partially in the preceding reign of Henry the Eighth. This reformation denied the supremacy of the Pope, not only in temporal, but also in spiritual concerns. This taking of the religious concerns of the Christian world out of the hands of one supreme government upon earth, where it had so long remained, led very naturally to an inquiry into

whose hands it should pass ; it led also to a question which must long or forever remain matter of dispute, whether it were most for the glory of God, and the spiritual comfort of man, that the church should acknowledge one supreme head upon earth, or that each individual, presuming on the infallibility of his own private judgment, should act under its uncontrouled guidance. It would be inconsistent with the object now in view, to enter into the merits of this controversy, but it is quite in order to state the result so far at least as the occasion requires.

Henry the Eighth of England quarrelled with the Pope, because the latter refused to divorce him from his wife, in order that his majesty might take to himself another. After some ineffectual efforts to obtain the Pope's consent, Henry assumed the government of the Catholic church in England, denied the supremacy of the Pope, and made some other convenient alterations. This affair happened some nine or ten years after the commencement of the Lutheran reformation, and led the way for its introduction into England, for although Henry seemed as much disposed to deny the supremacy of Martin Luther as that of Pope Clement VII, yet he commenced, the innovation in England, although he adhered to the last to most of the Catholic tenets ; it is true Henry, neither Papist nor Lutheran, did not introduce the reformation, yet he opened a door through which it passed, and to it, whether good or bad, many an English subject yielded in the reign of Henry. During the short reign of his successor, the reformation was introduced by authority of the young king and his advisers, but the British subjects, to very many of whom change of religion seemed not very disagreeable, yet seemed disposed to exercise their private judgment, the king set the example of disobedience, and whether that was right or wrong, the people would be disobedient also ; their private judgment which released them from obedience to the Pope of Rome, would also release them

from obedience to the pope of England. Discontent, disunion, and spiritual opposition grew in magnitude, until they had nearly broken into treasonable rebellion. The zealots who regulated the British church under the reforming princes, retained many of the forms and ceremonies of rejected popery. This gave offence, and hence arose the proposed reformations of the reformation, until religion threatened to assume so many shapes, that true Protestantism might possibly be lost sight of, or totally extinguished by the proseylitism of its members. Opposition to the established reformed church grew, if possible, more violent than it had been to popery, every extravagance which had been charged upon the Catholics, was now charged upon the Protestants. The most formidable of the opponents of the new religion from the great simplicity of their doctrine and the almost total rejection of ceremonies, obtained the title of "Puritans," a name well understood at this day in New-England. The story of Pope Joan which had been rejected even by the enemies of Catholicity, on account of its extreme improbability, was now brought up anew by the enemies of Protestantism, who saw it, as they said, scandalously exemplified, in the instance of Pope Elizabeth. In this way did the Puritans, and those still more pure than the Puritans, rail at, and dispute the orthodoxy of the established church, until the civil government which had incorporated itself with the established hierarchy, began seriously to apprehend that all order might be overthrown by what was then called the growing fanaticism.

It was now resolved to establish by compulsion, what it was too plain could not be established by persuasion, and to substitute the sword, if necessary, for the bible. In other words, all who would not bow to the new doctrine as expounded by archbishop Cranmer, were to be persecuted, whether the recusants adhered to the "abominations of popery," or to the no less abominable tenets of puritanism, whether they adhered to the old church with its head, or to the new

one without a head. A full history of these affairs, as impossible, as the collection would now be useless, will not be here attempted. One case out of the many will be noted, because America is directly concerned in it. It grew out of the British dissensions, and introduced an inquisitorial persecution into New-England.

It was in a great degree to intimidate and check the Puritan preachers, that queen Elizabeth of England, seeing the inefficacy of all other means, caused to be erected that unconstitutional tribunal, called "the high commission for ecclesiastical affairs," the proceedings of which were so offensive, that even her steadiest adherents did not fail to inveigh against it, while the Protestant writers unreservedly bestowed on it, the title of INQUISITION, describing it as "worse than Spanish." The extreme pliancy of the parliament to the dictates and wishes of this she-pope, this "over-ruler of the church" as she called herself, left no hope of peace to the Puritans.

Among the most successful of the Puritans, was a man named Robert Brown, a republican in principle. Bold in his attack on the established church, and possessing a very insinuating address, he collected followers with great rapidity, and had he persevered might possibly have shaken the mighty fabric of Protestantism: while others of his party were persecuted, the popularity of Brown seemed to protect him against the advocates of the high church. The government, before it would resort to the desperate expedient of a personal attack, had resort to an experiment on his virtue; Brown was not proof against a bribe, he was offered, and he accepted a comfortable benefice, and became a staunch Protestant. His followers had already taken the title of *Brownists*, and by this name they continued to be known notwithstanding the defection of their leader.

The Brownists or a considerable number of them fled to Holland, under the guidance of John Robinson their newly elected chief, after a peaceable resi-

dence of some years near Leyden, they once more thought of migration. The cause which influenced them to this new step is variously related. Some will have it that a continued reduction in their number occasioned by death and by proselytism, threatened the extinction of their sect, and that the chief zealots resolved on the only mode which could in their opinion defer or prevent the apprehended evil. Other accounts quite as probable as that just adverted to, would have it, that, continuing firm in their religious and *political* principles, and being suspected of holding a correspondence with their friends in England, British jealousy was aroused. The Dutch government influenced, as was rumoured, by the head of the British church, rendered the situation of the Puritans so unpleasant, that they sought safety in the wilderness of the new world. Whatever the motive or cause, the greater part of the Puritans who had settled in Holland, together with many of those who remained until now in England, embarked for America, in the year 1620, and after a passage of more than two months, reached Cape Cod. Every circumstance connected with their new situation, was calculated to promote peace and unity so necessary to mutual support in the midst of imminent peril and great difficulties; and it might reasonably be expected, that a society which had suffered so much persecution, and had undergone so much to secure to themselves a freedom of conscience, would be prompt to recognize this right, as, inherent in others, but, strange to relate, they were scarcely arrived, and but imperfectly established in their new settlements, when they began to dispute on speculative points of doctrine, and instead of allowing each individual, as seemed to be a part of their doctrine while in Europe, to exercise his own judgment, one party insisted on a general compliance with its own view, and this being the stronger, the weaker was compelled to submit to a sentence of expulsion. A minister of the name of Williams unwilling to submit to rules prescribed by

others, and conscientiously believing himself more pure than most of his Puritan brethren, placed himself at the head of the exiled. After traversing the wilderness for some time, they fixed on a new home, to which they gave the appropriate name of Providence. Thus was Rhode Island first settled by Europeans. Mr. Hooker another preacher being compelled to retire, was accompanied by those who espoused his particular tenets, to the Connecticut River, contiguous to which they made a settlement. A sect still purer than any yet mentioned, owed its origin to a female preacher named Hutchinson: they were expelled, and found a home on the Piscataqua river, now part of the State of New-Hampshire.

These persecutions, be it remembered, were of European origin, it would be a grievous error in republican America to foster the ugly germe, which in its growth might endanger or destroy the noble fabric reared by a more enlightened policy. Religious antipathy is of all disorders the most dangerous to entertain, the most difficult to eradicate. It is truly worthy of freemen to make a resolute stand against it. It is a melancholy reflection, that the peace making system which God gave to his creatures, undoubtedly for their good, should be converted by them into the material for war, and justification of violence. Let the kings of Spain and Italy, if they will, torment their fellow-men, under the pretext that they are forwarding the will of Heaven; let the spirit of Louis the Fourteenth rise up to exterminate the French Hugonots, and let these in turn retaliate with unsparing and insatiable violence, the injuries inflicted on them by their cruel and bloody oppressors; let the intolerant spirit of Henry the Eighth, the furious bigotry of a Mary, the cold-hearted systematic and cruel policy of an Elizabeth, continue to crimson the fields of England with the blood of the innocent, let the gore-soaken ghost of Oliver Cromwell send the Catholics of Ireland to "Hell or to Connaught," let Ferdinand of Spain yet rave about his favorite Inquisition, and let

the Duke of York, the heir apparent to the British throne, announce his intention of restoring the expiring Inquisition of his country to its former *blazing* brightness, let the sword and the faggot give the law of the tyrant to the slaves of Europe, a wiser and a juster course must govern the American, he has bravely conquered his enemies, he must also, if necessary, conquer himself, if in the war of passion against reason, and prejudice against religion, he becomes the blind ally of intolerance and error, then he has but escaped one thralldom to render himself the willing captive of another. The sense of justice which actuated Washington did more than even his bravery, for his country; the battle of Long Island was unpropitious to America, it might have been fatal and would be disgraceful, had the Catholics who so nobly bled and died on that occasion, been prevented from siding with liberty, lest being successful they might establish an Inquisition in Maryland; had the Puritans of New-England been rejected as unfit allies of other Christians, the war would not have been checked at Saratoga, and perhaps the best terms republicans could expect would be, that the Hudson might form the boundary between the British colonies and the United States; had the American Protestant refused the proffered alliance of Louis the Sixteenth, the persecutor of French Protestants, the capture of York-Town would possibly not be attempted, and the defeat of Cornwallis be left for another and a more distant day.

The Americans are renowned for nearly all that can give a proud celebrity to a nation; in war they had their Washington; in science, they had their Rittenhouse; they had their Franklins, their Henrys, (not Henry the spy,) their Hancocks, their Adams's; they have their Jeffersons, their Jacksons, their Clays, their Clintons, Fulton gave the steam boat, Franklin drew the lightning from the Heavens and rendered it harmless. American statesmen are giving laws to nations, and disrobing even the Holy Al-

liance of the terrors with which it was clad. Can it be that such a people will consent to be the submissive dupes of the greatest deception ever practised upon rational man? Religion and reason equally reject the monstrous presumption, that the law of a meek Saviour can be a code of blood, cruelty, and proscription. May Americans while they break the tie which bound them politically to their European masters, also rid themselves of those errors of every kind, which designing sophistry would engraft on the human mind.

The early settlers of British America, as has been already observed, brought with them their prejudices, and planted them in a soil destined to be that of free inquiry and virtuous habits. The natural difficulties which the new world opposed to the early settlers, their poverty, the low state of literature in an age when the art of printing was known but as a new and imperfect invention, all contributed to deprive the settlers of the benefit of a liberal education, and exposed them to the influence of deception, and to the adoption of errors which craft introduced, and satanic malice alone would ingraft on plants the noblest of God's creation. Time, the growth of liberal principles, and the operation of benign and equal laws, are gradually withdrawing the veil which wicked counsellors and blind guides had placed between man and his God, a foolish hatred of the Pope is giving way to a love of the neighbour; and a ridiculous belief in witches, to a knowledge of true religion. It is to be regretted that the bad leaven is not yet thoroughly worked out of the imperfectly enlightened mind. I feel that I owe to the land of my residence, the country of my allegiance, the home and birth-place of my children, to aid in purging the nation of an error, the more to be deplored as being too well calculated to stay the progress of rational liberty, at some future day to overthrow it, to raise an established religion in the land, and, as a very probable consequence, to institute an *inquisition*, no matter whether nominally for or against

Popery, no matter with what professed object, but certainly having for its real and sole view, to advance the insidious design of some aspiring individual, who once in power would be sovereign, the people, thence forward, nothing. Every citizen should apply his best endeavour to strengthen the power, to secure and perpetuate the stability and happiness of his country. The loyal soldier offers his sword; the patriotic banker presents his purse; an individual not strong enough to fight, nor rich enough to contribute the precious metal, tenders these pages as a proof of his devotion to the public good, and as an evidence of his anxious desire that a nation so prosperous, so progressive in arts, science, and literature, in refinement of every kind that can promote happiness or adorn society, should not continue the slave of an ill founded prejudice, the bane of England, nursed by ignorance, and maintained by tyranny, and which has been unfortunately spread over this country, and yet in a degree remains, although it ought to have been shaken off at the moment when the robe of liberty was put on. Whatever may be thought of this essay on the score of literary merit, it claims a place in the nation's respect, as the tribute of a heart sincerely devoted to the public good.

Admitting for a moment, which I do, only for the sake of argument, but which I will hereafter deny, that the establishment of a bloody inquisition is an essential emanation of the Catholic Church, and that every Catholic is bound to receive it as an article of Catholic faith, then I must say, the outcry against it comes with a truly bad grace from those who themselves have instituted an inquisition as scrutinizing, a persecution as unrelenting, and punishments as cruel, as the most exaggerated accounts of those of Spain and Portugal. The kings and queens of England, both Catholics and Protestants, seemed to vie with each other in acts of cruelty and barbarity, so remarkable for a want of forbearance and charity,

that every religious sect claiming kindred to heaven must disavow them.

It is remarkable that the clamour against the Inquisition was loud in proportion as those who condemned it; were themselves persecutors, the greatest persecutor being the loudest bellower; the mildest, the least noisy. The British Protestants are an instance of the former, the Quakers of the latter. Perhaps it may be wrong to rank the Quakers even among the mildest libellers of religion, for it would rather seem that they condemn the institution, as all ought to condemn it, without charging its acts to any religious sect or tenet. The Protestant, it might be supposed, would be restrained by a fear of retaliation, but, like the robber, he dares to offend within sight of the gallows. That the injured refrained so much from a resort to the means of annoyance within his power, seems unaccountable. The transactions of the British Inquisition have indeed been sufficiently spread before the world, and that by several writers, but generally more as matter of history, than to retaliate the wrongs inflicted by British writers on others.

It is painful to be obliged to maintain in this enlightened country, that the religion of heaven is not sanguinary. The attempt to prove that it is not so, implies a charge that such is the belief of at least some of the citizens, it cannot unfortunately be denied that the sacrilegious libeller has found his way to free America, here then, even here, must be refuted the daring libel which ascends to heaven and impeaches the divinity there. It is painful to have recourse to a detail of cruelties inflicted by inquisitorial tribunals in a Protestant country, but it is impossible to get fairly through our subject without adverting to some of them. Could I delight in the recital, I might fill a volume as large as Fox's book of Martyrs, and more true than many of his statements.* An allusion to some of

*A more shameless attempt, than this book of martyrs, to impose on the credulity of mankind has never been presented to

them is indispensable as my only means of proving that inquisitions were of Protestant as well as of Catholic countries, and that if a clergyman acting as an officer of it in Spain be a conclusive proof that it exists in virtue of a tenet of the Catholic religion, the British Protestant must also confess it is an essential article of his faith, for the ministers of his church were prompt in taking their part in the acts of the inquisitorial tribunals of his country. My end must be obtained if, by this course and exposition of the subject, if by this plain reasoning, I direct the public odium from a religion which is spotless, to the civil magistrate where alone it can properly rest. I must at least succeed in dividing the odium between the libelled Protestant and the libelled Catholic, that is if rational beings can still adhere to the ridiculous presumption, to the unexamined assumption, that the religion of heaven is a system of cruel injustice. The persecutions by the British Inquisition, it will be found, embraced every head under which we could rank the acts of the Spanish.

In the capricious reign of Henry the Eighth, this "husband without fidelity and lover without delicacy," commissioners were appointed to inquire into *heresies*, and irregular practices. This Inquisition was in its power, and the mode of executing its authority not materially different from that established in Catholic countries, yet it will not be presumed that it had the sanction of papal authority, for the "defender of the faith" showed no inclination to submit his will to the Pope, or to seek his holiness's ratification of any regulation he might think proper to propose. It is not too much to suppose that had Henry remained in full communion with the church of Rome, this in-

the world. I cannot enter into particulars without swelling this work far beyond the original design, nor without the risk of being drawn into theological controversy which I am resolved to avoid. The Book of martyrs is a volume of falsehoods which should be excluded from every library; and, as it is false, rejected by every christian and moral society.

quiry into heresies would be dignified not only with the name of Inquisition to which it was fairly entitled, but it would also be designated as popish.

This thing called *heresy* seems to have no definite or general meaning; the lexicographers explain it, as an opinion contrary to the fundamental or orthodox points of religion, it seems to be derived from the french word *heresie*, or from the latin word *hæresis*, and this later from *hæreo* to stick or adhere, and thus far may very conveniently be applied to different purposes. In Spain it is a denial of transubstantiation; in England, an avowal of it. Henry the Eighth called every man a heretic, who believed more or less than his celebrated six articles; his successor Edward the Sixth threw aside these six articles, and substituted some thirty or forty other articles, to disbelieve, doubt, or dispute which constituted heresy in his reign. Until men will agree what constitutes orthodoxy in religion, they will never agree as to the proper definition of heresy.

To discover and punish offences against Henry's six articles, was the duty assigned to his inquisitorial commissioners; punishments were awarded according to a fixed scale, "The denial of the real presence in the sacrament subjected the person to death by *burning*, and to the same forfeiture as in cases of treason, without being admitted the privilege of abjuration. The denial of any of the other five articles, even though recanted, was punishable by forfeiture of goods and chattels, and imprisonment during the king's pleasure: an obstinate adherence to error, or a relapse, was adjudged to be felony, and punishable with death. The marriage of priests was subject to the same punishments, Abstaining from confession and from receiving the eucharist at the accustomed seasons, subjected the person to fine and imprisonment during the king's pleasure, and if the criminal persevered after correction, he was punished with death and forfeiture, as in cases of felony."

This surely is an Inquisition to all intents and purposes. Had it been related of Rome, Spain, or Portugal, it would be charged to popery and set down as an article of Catholic faith. But being a regulation of England it is to be passed over as quite inoffensive, yet the church was as fairly chargeable with it in England, as the church of Rome would be, had a similar law been promulged in Italy or Spain. The fact is, religion has no concern in the affair. In Catholic and in Protestant countries it is alike a mere state policy, which the only civil government could establish and which it only directs, using the name of the church as a cloak, and employing ministers of the respective religions, when they could be obtained, to take some kind of agency in the transactions. The church is not to be judged by the conduct of its ministers; it disclaims acts of blood in England as well as in Rome; the Protestant and the Catholic tenets are in this respect alike; and the Protestant who would not willingly see his own church libelled, should not hastily libel another.

Of the particular acts of the Inquisition in Catholic countries it becomes quite unnecessary to give a detail. They have been so blazoned forth, and that so often, in so many shapes, and by so many persons, by books, pamphlets, newspapers, ballads, shows, pictures, &c. that all must have heard of them. The truth would quite fill a respectable sized volume, the zeal of *religious* writers, the vindictiveness of persons who suffered under its lash, and the private interest of those who seek to better their fortunes by dealing in the marvellous, have added such a mass of fiction and exaggerations, that a connoisseur in this kind of composition, might collect quite a delectable library or museum. I am no apologist for that tribunal, and will not undergo the trouble of defending it in any shape, but leave it, or rather its memory, to rest under all the odium the utmost stretch of misrepresen-

tation can heap on it, as a merited infliction for the wrongs it did to others. I deny not its existence, but I will certainly prove, that it was a *civil* institution, opposed in its proceedings by the principles and laws of revealed religion. The greater the excesses of the Inquisition, the more incredible it must appear that religion could sanction its proceedings; those enemies of religion who magnified the crimes of the Inquisition, have pursued the worst possible course to obtain belief in their accounts; the credulous followers of Johannah Southcote might possibly lend an ear, but every man of sense or discrimination must surely discard such rhapsodies as underserving attention.

As it may be new to some readers to observe the term inquisition applied to the acts of British monarchs, it becomes incumbent on the writer to give evidence of the justness of the application, some proof that such existed in a Protestant country and among a people principally Protestant. The better to elucidate the similarity between the two Inquisitions, I will try to arrange the character and acts of the British tribunal under such heads as must have most forcibly struck those who have read the acts of the Catholic Inquisition. Should any pious zealot deem the evidence incomplete, I pledge myself to supply the deficiency to heart's content in a new edition to which this work will very possibly arrive.

The British Inquisition.

Hume, who will not be suspected of any leaning to popery, gives the following account of the British High Court of Commission.

“Any word or writing which tended towards *heresy*, schism, or sedition, was punishable by the High Commissioners, or any three of them; they alone were judges of what expressions had that tendency: they proceeded not by information, but upon *rumour*, suspicion, or according to their own fancy. They administered an oath, by which the party cited before them, was bound to answer any question which should be propounded to him: whoever refused this oath, though under pretext that he might be thereby brought to accuse himself, or his dearest friend, was punishable by imprisonment. In short, an *inquisitorial tribunal, with all its terrors and iniquities, was erected in the kingdom*. Full discretionary powers were bestowed, with regard to the inquiry, trial, sentence, and penalty inflicted; except only, that corporal punishments were restrained by the patent of the prince which erected that court, not by the act of parliament which empowered him.” Milnor says, the dissenters filled the kingdom with complaints of the oppression which they suffered from this court during the reigns of Elizabeth and the two Stuarts, representing it as *much more intolerable than the Inquisition itself*.” Maclaine, in his notes on Mosheim, shows that, “the high commission court, was empowered to make inquiry, not only by legal means, but also by *rack, torture*, inquisition and imprisonment; that the fines and imprisonment to which it condemned persons, were *limited by no rule, but its own pleasure*.”

A multitude of authorities could be produced in evidence, that this British tribunal was in effect an Inquisition. It would be absurd in this case to adhere to a mere word or name in the trial of a fact, or to insist that there was no inquisition in England, because the High Court of Commission was not express-

ly known as such. An acute writer* observes, that “the chief difference between the two courts (those of Spain and England) consisted in their *names*; one was the court of *Inquisition*, the other, of *High Commission*.” It was charged on the Spanish Inquisition, that it was actively hostile to the introduction of books or writings calling in question its own power, criticising its conduct, or disputing in any respect, the orthodoxy of the Catholic faith. The British court acted on a similar principle, all writings opposed to, or confronting its doctrines with a view to their candid examination, were proscribed, and the authors visited by all the force of a court, as unaccountable for its transactions, as its power was unquestionable and unlimited. The law conferred such power on Henry the Eighth, that every act of his in respect to religion, must be taken as the law of the land; his instructions were to be held as the only rule of faith. To preach or maintain any thing contrary to his will was highly penal, the convict “for the first offence shall recant, for the second abjure and bear a faggot, and for the third, he shall be adjudged a *heretic*, be *burned*, and loose all his goods and chattels.” These laws were substantially adopted in after reigns, they became the code spiritual of the court of high commission, so far as a tribunal which professed to be independent of control, could be supposed amenable to any authority beyond its own will. Had Henry the Eighth become a convert to Mahometanism, he might have had a seraglio of wives, but he was inclined to Catholicity, and probably impressed with the belief that it was the true religion, his passions gained an ascendancy over his reason, he departed from the Catholic faith just as far as was necessary to the indulgence of his desires to a certain extent, and, by an imperfect or formal compliance with that religion in other respects, seemed to propose a compromise with heaven, whereby to secure to himself the

* Rymer.

pleasures of two worlds. It cannot however be doubted, that a man who could indulge in marriage after marriage, even by the murder of wife after wife, would reject the Bible for the Alcoran, were there no other road open to the gratification of his desires. It is not impossible, that England owes to the accommodating manners of Archbishop Cranmer, that Turkish rule did not exclude christianity from that nation. That a bad law should remain inoperative, or, in technical language, a dead statute, is no apology for those who enacted it, that this apology, futile as it would be, cannot be alledged in defence of the British zealots, appears at large in the history of the last three centuries. That history, so far as the present subject calls for its review, can give little gratification to the reader, or to the writer, it is a history of injuries and reprisals, of murders and counter-murders, not only offensive to every honest moral feeling, but also so many sacrilegious insults to the divinity. These transactions will be passed over as lightly as possible, but they must be partially alluded to, and partially detailed, for it seems necessary, in order to prove that the Spanish Inquisition was not Catholic, to show that there also, existed an Inquisition in Protestant countries, which the Protestant will doubtless say, and say truly, was not Protestant.

Heresy.

The reader is presumed to be satisfied, that an inquisition existed in England as well as in Italy, the laws of that country for the punishment of heretics were not dead statutes. The parliament was not more complaisant in conferring power on the prince, that the latter was prompt in its exercise.

Henry the Eighth, a prince half Protestant, half Catholic, obtained of his parliament the enactment of every law which could minister to his pleasure or subserve his unruly ambition; it surrendered to him

in effect and in fact, both the civil and religious liberties of the country. Among the parliamentary enactments was one which declared that the king, for the time being, with the advice of council,* or the major part of them (the council of course appointed by himself) might issue proclamations, which should have the force of acts of parliament, and under what pains and penalties he should think proper. Under the authority thus vested, commissioners were appointed to inquire into heresies and irregular practices. Henry was the least fit man in existence for the exercise of such monstrous powers, as the law conferred on him. He was so unsteady in his purposes, so unfaithful to his promises, so cruel and unrelenting to his enemies, and so treacherous to his friends, that his course of life was a perpetual paradox. As he advanced in years, his evil propensities caught still greater hold of him, until there seemed to remain of the man, but the outer appearance. So formidable did he grow, even to his friends, that, when death approached and seemed inevitable, there was but one man in his kingdom who had the resolution to advise the monster to prepare for his end. During the reign of this first "defender of the faith" the executions of persons who differed from him in religious opinions, were numerous and horrid, including Catholics and Protestants, for neither could be safe where the king

*The privy council of the king is never called together by public proclamation, the practice is to summon them by a private and personal notice. The court etiquette forbids the attendance of those not specially noticed. From this it may be seen how ineffectual must be any presumed check of the council over the proposed measures of a king, who appoints the whole council in the first instance, may select from them in the second, and finally may dismiss those who prove restiff. The late king of England erased with his own hand, from the council book, the name of Charles James Fox. His vice-king of Ireland, about the same time, did a similar honour to Henry Grattan. These gentlemen, by this act of royal notice, lost their title of "right honorable," they enjoyed to their death that which the public voice conferred, the title of PATRIOT.

professed a religion different from both, and at a time when an accusation of heresy was the surest, as it was the common course of attacking those whose enmity was feared or whose loyalty was suspected. Among the latest acts of his cruelty, was an order for the execution of the Duke of Norfolk; the warrant was in the hands of the executioner, but the death of the tyrant took place in time to save the Duke's life. The capriciousness of this prince was strongly exemplified in the sacrifice of his favourite Cromwell. This man was a protégé and faithful adherent of his royal master. From being the son of a poor blacksmith, he was advanced by the king, until finally placed at the head of the commission for inquiring into and suppressing heresies, but even here, he was not safe. The king suspected the fidelity or became jealous of the power of his favourite minister. Cromwell was accused of heresy and treason, and condemned without being heard in his own defence. One only favour could be extorted from the tyrant, and that was, that the fallen minister might not be burned as a heretic. "He fell (says the historian) by that unconstitutional power, which he himself had raised." Henry was one of those few men who leave this world, without some friend to regret their death, or delight in pronouncing their eulogy. More disposed to conceal than to recount the cruelties that disgraced this reign, I will not, while unprovoked, enter into unnecessary particulars. Montague states, that "during this reign, barbarities were committed under the forms of justice, as shocking to human nature, as any to be met with in history, under the most bloody tyrants."

Prosecutions for heresy, did not cease with the death of Henry. In after reigns the fierceness of anti-christian laws, seemed to be maintained as if with a desire not merely to emulate, but if possible to outdo every precedent. The reign of the infant Edward the Sixth, the successor of Henry the Eighth, commenced with the formal introduction of the reformed religion into England, under the auspices of Arch-

bishop Cranmer, its chief champion. This young prince, who died before he reached manhood, was made instrumental in the introduction of the new religion, and the punishment of the *heretics* of the old. The viciousness of a bad education, and the errors imposed on his young mind, added to the circumstance that he had not attained the years, when reflection may discover error, might be pleaded in extenuation of his crimes, but the history of British kings and queens, from the reign of Henry the Eighth even to this day, presents but a continued, uninterrupted persecution of the subjects, on account of their particular religious tenets, whether by a High court of commission acting under the immediate government of a king whose word was to have the force of an act of parliament, or by a judge with a formal act of parliament in his hand, is very immaterial to the sufferer. The present mitigated severity of the law arises out of circumstances over which kings have no positive control, and a progress of refinement which cannot be arrested by the evil disposed. A modern speech in the British parliament assures us that the zeal of the early reformers, has been transmitted to the heir apparent of the British crown. The history of the last twenty years is in evidence that were evil fortune to give Britain a king willing and capable to erect a new court of commission, there would not be wanting men and clergy, capable and willing to perform the duties of the office, and that with all the barbarity of the worst ages. The British inquisition yet exists, but happily in its wane, the Duke of York may be troubled with qualms of conscience, Archbishop Magee may sing *requiems* to the memory of his pious prototype Cranmer, and Sir Abraham Bradley King, may drink to the glorious and immortal memory, there will however soon remain of the British, but what remains of the Spanish inquisition—its history. When men will no longer have interest in misrepresentation, our subject will be candidly investigated, and all will agree in this truth, that designing hypocrites have too

successfully laboured to establish the absurdity, that revealed religion participated in the bloody deeds of the civil governments of Europe.

Death.

The number of persons who lost their lives in England, by persecution on account of their religious tenets, are so great, of grades so various, and in such a variety of ways, that distinct specification is as impossible, as it would be disgusting. Of the fact generally, enough is already published; and few, if any, there are, who do not know more on this head, than I would wish to insert, were the long catalogue before me. Enough here to say, that the victims were very numerous, some dying in consequence of the length and severity of imprisonment, or the privations they endured, others died under or in consequence of the severity of torture, and many by the common mode of the gallows. This ignominious death was sometimes attended with those barbarous tortures reserved by law for persons convicted of high treason, but never executed in their utmost rigour, except when the inflictors made religion the pretext for cruelty. Heretics were not only hanged in England, but, agreeably to the horrid sentence of the law, and to the no less horrid spirit of the times, cut down while yet alive, their bowels torn out, and burned before their faces, their heads cut off, their bodies divided into quarters, and the mangled carcases left to be disposed of, as the king might please to direct.

Corporal Punishment.

This head embraces cases where actual torture was not applied, and where death by the hands of the executioner did not close the sufferings of the prisoner. Like those doomed to death, their number is too

great for specific detail. All have heard, more or less, of the corporal pains inflicted on heretics, and although there occurred but a single case, it would be sufficient for the present purpose. I will here mention one, to make a case, it is but a comparatively mild specimen of the many I could adduce. Owen Hopton a lieutenant of the tower of London, caused one of his prisoners, a young lady of a respectable family, to be severely scourged, because he could not prevail on her to attend the public service of a church which she deemed heretical. The governor of York-castle acted, if not with more justice, certainly with less cruelty, he dragged by force his numerous prisoners, and compelled them to be present during the service in a church, to the doctrines of which they were religiously opposed. These, it is true, are not the immediate acts of government, but if not directed by it, they yet show, that the underling felt himself at liberty to act at discretion towards his prisoners. A government which may rule without responsibility, will seldom be just in its decisions, because it is more directed to the safety or advantage of the person of the ruler, than to the benefit or good of the governed; the evil genius that directs the head, is too apt to descend through the body, and every subaltern tyrant apes the manners of his chief, the example of permitted, like that of authorized, persecution, barbarizes the people; this reaches its worst pitch, when the support of religion becomes the pretext of wrong, for if the sword may be drawn in vindication of the cause of God, will not it follow, that the advocates of each creed, as they succeed to an ascendancy of moral power, become vested with the bloody authority of extirpating their neighbours? The civil form of government adopted by the citizens of these States, is gradually extinguishing the danger of such a trial in this country, and in this change we have our best, perhaps our only security, that America has not become as Europe was described at one time to, "one wild altar, on which every religious sect offered up human

victims to its creed," "enormous prisons where one part of the creation are distressed captives, and the other their un pitying keepers." Americans! do not be led into the belief that the Catholic religion in one country, or the Protestant religion in another, ever sanctioned the bloody decrees of an Inquisition in either, for, were this the case, you might be bound to drive them from your country. The law which allows liberty of conscience to all, and protects every individual in the exercise of his religion, does not extend to those, whose belief and practices are subversive of public order and peace, or destructive of liberty and of life. Could I believe that the Christian faith was, as a fundamental tenet of it, sanguinary, I would free myself from its discipline and restraints, its duties, and mortifications, and trusting entirely to Providence as to my fate in the next world, enjoy as far as possible the comforts of this, the convenient seat of the Deist.

Torture.

Dr. Milnor in his letters to a Prebendary, says, "it appears, by an account of one of the sufferers, that the following tortures were in use against the Catholics in the tower.

"1. The common rack, in which the limbs were stretched by levers.

"2. The scavenger's daughter, so called, being a hoop in which the body was bent, until the head and feet met.

"3. The chamber called "little ease," being a hole so small, that a person could neither stand, sit, or lie straight in it.

"4. The iron gauntlets.

"In some instances, needles were thrust under the prisoner's nails."

After this, it may be expected that the justly indignant cry against the Inquisition in Catholic countries,

may be extended to all inquisitions, wherever the country, whatever the religion of the inquisitors. Although the British torture should be confined to an application of the instruments and means above recited, yet it may boldly stand comparison with the Lisbon tribunal, admitting as truth the most exaggerated descriptions of it. Coustos stretched upon the rack in the dismal dungeon of a Portuguese prison, could not surely envy the happiness of the wretch whose limbs were stretched on the rack in the tower of London. His dislocated shoulders, while the backs of his hands were forced together behind his back, could not create more pain or more danger, than must be felt by the heretic, the back of whose head and feet met while he lay bent on the torturing hoop. The worst of the dungeons of Goa (and these are represented as most wretched) permitted the prisoner to stretch his limbs; that would have been a luxury, to the inhabitant of the "Little ease." The application of torture is the act of the Inquisition on which the chief reliance is placed by those who use it as an argument against the Catholic religion, are they also satisfied that it be used in like manner against the Protestant? I presume not. It has nothing to do with either. Torture is of human invention.

Burning.

'The application of fire to the human body is the utmost exertion of torture; to destroy the body through its agency is the consummation of cruelty. If there be a religion in the world which can authorize it, that religion is not of God. There is no christian sect however absurd in some respects may be its practices, that would not repel the charge, there is no zealot however fanatical, who would patiently submit to the accusation. It may be the law of the pagan and may be among the rites of his religion, but it shall be shown hereafter, that such is not the doctrine of revelation, that the

church has no power over life or limb, that "the church disclaims the right of the sword, and the use of fines and confiscation, to promote her spiritual ends."

The infliction of death by fire is of very early origin, and might with little difficulty be traced to a period anterior to popery. In the first century of the Christian era, the tyrant Nero caused several Christians at Rome to be tied to stakes and burned. When this kind of torture was first known in England, we shall probably not be able to ascertain with certainty, it was however at an early date. "We find (says that great commentator Blackstone) among our ancient precedents a writ *de heretico comburendo*, (of burning heretics) which is thought by some to be *as ancient as the common law itself*." This writ was issuable by the civil authority, "being not a writ of course, but issuing only by the special direction of the king in council." Were it a fundamental tenet of religion, that heretics might be burned, the execution of it could not be regulated or restrained by the civil power, at a time when England was a Catholic country, and its princes acknowledged the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, nor can this observation be effected by the assertion of Blackstone, that subsequently, in the reign of Henry the Fourth, the power of convicting heretics was vested in the diocesan alone, and the execution of the sentence made subject to the order of the bishop, without waiting the consent of the crown, for admitting this, yet the practice could not be popish, as this new power was given by act of parliament, and not derived from any ecclesiastical authority. Thus far it certainly, and avowedly, was a *civil* institution. This writ remained in force until the twenty ninth year of Charles the Second, when it was abolished *by act of parliament*. Milnor states that this *burning act* was passed by the parliament in the reign of Henry the Fourth, Blackstone, says it was only amended or explained at that time, this difference of its history is now immaterial, as all agree it was a civil institution. Milnor says it was

passed without any solicitation either from the pope or the clergy. Sir Mathew Hale insists, in opposition to Blackstone, that the writ was not *in any case* demandable of common right, but "grantable or otherwise, merely at the king's discretion. Under this act, two anabaptists were burned in the seventeenth year of the reign of Elizabeth, and two Arians in the ninth of James the First.

Henry the Eighth who used to send the Catholic and Protestant tied together to the place of execution, caused nineteen Dutchmen and six women to be arrested on a charge of heresy, they were examined as to their belief in his *six articles*, fourteen of them were burned. This was a British *auto de fé*. One Lambert a schoolmaster of London, actuated by imprudent zeal, opposed Henry, aided by several of his bishops, in a solemn debate to which he was invited or rather challenged. The question was on the real presence, and Henry being declared victorious, the unfortunate Lambert was ordered to retract his opinion; he refused, was led off to Smithfield, and there burned.

Edward the Sixth was early initiated in the *piety* of the times, his zeal ripened quicker than his reason, even in his minority he showed no little uneasiness at restraint; had he reached the *years of discretion*, Protestantism would have blazed throughout the land. This young champion of christianity was with difficulty prevented from committing his own sister to the flames, to prevent her from committing idolatry.

The change of religion from the half popery of Henry and the full protestantism of Edward, to the entire Catholicity of Mary made no alleviating alteration in persecution on account of religion, except as to the objects of it. The Smithfield fire was scarcely quenched by the termination of one reign, when it was lit up anew on the commencement of another. Henry's opposition to the Pope left no room for presuming that popery had any direction or concern in his inquisition, neither was it pretended that Mary had any such authority from the Holy See. So far from

this being the case, it is well known, that in the instructions from the pope, handed to the queen by Cardinal Pole, there is not a sentence recommending persecution, or proposing the introduction of an inquisition, nor had such been proposed by the body of the clergy, nor yet is there any reference to persecution, or the enforcing of religion in any shape, in the transactions of the synod held at that time in England by the Catholic bishops, at which the pope's legate presided. Burnet, a protestant writer, highly prejudiced against Catholicity, acknowledges the liberality and tolerating spirit which actuated the Catholic bishops on this occasion : yet we will find that Mary, herself a Catholic, pursued a course in no manner influenced by the example or precepts of her clergy, but giving loose to her passions, she seemed resolved to give no quarter to those who differed from her in religious principles. So odious was her conduct to the Spaniards, and so desirous were they of exculpating themselves and their religion from any participation in the sanguinary course pursued by the British queen, that friar Alphonsus had directions to disclaim it, from the pulpit, the preacher directly charged the English bishops who countenanced the queen, with being the authors of such inhuman and abominable cruelties. The preacher probably alluded to Gardiner and Bonner, who, in opposition to Cardinal Pole and other bishops, supported the policy which determined Mary, without any appeal to church authority, to take upon herself the responsibility of her violent conduct. The light in which the turbulent and menacing conduct of her Protestant subjects was represented by the advocates of persecution, was a strong appeal to the timidity of a woman, nor could it be overbalanced in her estimation by all that was said on the side of religion, in that cabinet council which took the unhappy resolution of employing fire and faggot against the British Protestants, to the eternal disgrace of all who were engaged in it. During the reign of this weak princess, England literally

presented but a national *auto de fé*. Happy would it be for England could persecution for religion end with her reign, but we shall see that, cameleon-like, persecution but changed colour, while it continued substantially the same.

Mary was a devotee to the Catholic religion, but like many of the bigots of other persuasions, her zeal was of that kind which would set the house of God on fire. Between ambition and piety, both ill regulated, we find in her character a strange medley of incongruity and absurdity. It is not among the least of her inconsistencies that while not denying but rather acknowledging the supremacy of the pope in spirituals, she yet retained the title of the head of the church. Among the barbarous acts during the reign of Mary, her enemies or rather the enemies of popery, rest their accusations against the Catholic religion, principally on the burning of Archbishop Cranmer. "*Qui gladio vivit gladio peribit.*" This man was conspicuously known during three successive reigns. A popish priest, he privately and publicly violated his solemn vow deliberately made in the face of heaven, and in the presence of the God of all christians. The pampered tool of the lecherous Henry, he scandalously exercised his sacerdotal function to dissolve the king's marriage, he put asunder those whom God put together. Throwing off every semblance of the religion he so long and so insincerely professed, he as Protestant Primate of England, became the counselor of the child-king Edward the Sixth, advising and abetting the persecution and burning of heretics; finally, alternately, adopting and rejecting every creed which revelation, zeal, caprice, or chance, offered, after professing popery, swearing to support the six articles, and forswearing both, after displaying the cowardice of a false christian, and the insincerity of a real hypocrite, after making sacrilege minister to his worldly convenience, and bigamy to his sensual appetite, he expiated his complicated crimes at the stake. The queen Mary having caused him to be indicted and

convicted of heresy, he was sent to Smithfield and there burned to death, a frightful instance of the instability of wordly grandeur, as it was of the cruelty of human nature. His life was a dishonour to his species, his death a lasting blot on the name of queen Mary.

Another person sacrificed to her vengeance was John Rogers. The death of this man, more than that of any other, has been made the instrument of exciting hatred against popery, of drawing the indignation of Protestants about the head of every Catholic in christendom, and all this for the misconduct of one woman. There is scarcely a school in which Protestant children are taught in the British dominions, where the sufferings of John Rogers, printed in penny and two penny pamphlets, may not be seen, with a picture of this minister, as a frontispiece, representing him standing in the midst of the flames, and expiring in the presence of his family. All this is industriously charged to popery, and thus is the infant Protestant taught to hate his Catholic neighbour. Such an education is contrary to all just notions of religion, and to all proper views of morality. This book has been sent from England to the British colonies in America, and here reprinted for the edification of the rising generation. It may yet be seen in the windows of our picture shops, and school book stores. Republicans of America! the sufferings of John Rogers is in the hands of your children, and to be found on the desks of some of those teachers, to whom you confide their instruction. As the sufferings of John Rogers are matter of history, they may be told, although possibly it might be more consonant with sound morality to suppress the book. As this history may tend to create a dislike to cruelty, it may be even useful, although it might possibly be better to produce respect for virtue, by figuring its own loveliness, than by disgusting us by its opposite. It may perhaps be deemed by some moralists, right to impress the infant mind with a dislike of queen Mary; but it is abominable to

make us hate each other, because John Rogers an English minister, was put to death by order of a British queen, a transaction in which no American had the least concern or part.

The persevering industry of some writers to charge to the religion of the divinity, the crimes of his creatures, is no where more shamefully evinced than in the writings of Protestant historians, respecting the reign of this princess. Could I believe that any tenet of the Catholic religion rendered it obligatory on the queen to send Cranmer, whatever may have been his errors, to the stake, I would be as loud as John Rogers ever was, in calling down destruction, fire, and lightning on the "whore of Babylon." The existence of such a persecuting spirit in the church is contradicted by every just idea of religion, by every book of the New Testament, by the example of our Saviour, and by the conduct of the primitive christians, as shall be clearly demonstrated, when I come to that part of my subject. As respects Mary, it should be noticed, that she was opposed in all her bloody proceedings by Cardinal Pole, the pope's legate, who succeeded Cranmer, as the Archbishop of Canterbury. This conduct of the Cardinal and his successful interposition whereby several Protestants escaped the flames, is candidly acknowledged by Protestant writers. Were it the religious duty of Cardinal Pole to encourage these murders, had heaven required the sacrifice of him, however strong might have been the feelings of his nature, however opposed to cruelty his heart, he yet would have offered up the victim; had any tenet of his religion required or sanctioned the cruelties of queen Mary, he would not dare to interpose his high influence and authority, to suspend them, even neutrality would not escape the papal censure. How then can it be presumed, in face of this evidence, that bloody executions of heretics is a fundamental tenet of the Catholic religion, and how especially can such be maintained by Protestant writers, with the fact before their eyes, that Archbishop Cranmer was con-

senting to, sanctioning, aiding and abetting in the murdering of Protestants as well as Catholics.* Had Cranmer and Pole been equally infamous, had they vied in commission of crime even unto murder, had they united in the erection of inquisitions, in inflicting tortures, and in the establishment of an *auto de fé* in England, it would not amount to evidence that either the Protestant or Catholic religion sanctioned such proceedings.

Queen Mary died on the 17th of November, 1558, after a violent reign of five years four months and eleven days; in the forty-second year of her age, England was released from her cruel government, but unhappily the inquisitorial persecution did not cease with her demise, it only underwent another change, or rather was restored to what Cranmer made it in the reign of Edward. Cardinal Pole died within a few hours after the decease of the queen. Had he lived, he would doubtless, as the first Catholic in the kingdom, have been the first object of that persecution which Elizabeth set on foot against her Catholic subjects. It is not impossible that he would have made food for a pious fire, and furnished a subject for a picture as moving as that of John Rogers in the flames of Smithfield. If, however, it be deemed advisable to furnish a new edition of the sufferings of John Rogers, with an additional picture and an additional hymn, so as to represent at once the cruelties of both English Protestants and English Catholics, the history of the kings and queens of England will furnish ample materials. Had the Cardinal been in England during the time when Henry was divorcing his wives, nothing could save his life, his sincere piety would have brought on him the malice of Cranmer, his opposition to the measures of Henry would have ensured him the hatred of that bloody tyrant. His old mother, however, felt the vengeance which could not reach him. She was imprisoned, and, after various

* Cobbett.

vain attempts to influence her to call home her son from his travels, or to cause him to signify his approval of the measures of Henry, she was, without the show of justice, butchered. A representation of an executioner, pursuing and chasing an old woman of seventy, around the public stage raised for her execution, wounding her with his axe as often as he could reach her, and at length dragging her mangled carcase to the block where he parted her grey head from her emaciated body, would be a scene the horror of which could not be rendered greater even by a Smithfield fire.

Elizabeth who during the reign of her sister Mary, hypocritically professed the Roman Catholic religion, on mounting the British throne, threw off the mask, and as head of the British church, publicly professed the principles of the reformation. To pourtray the true character of this queen is not very easy, her reign was one of terror, the severest interdictions were laid on the press, it fell nearly entirely into the hands of over zealous Protestants, or cold and timid Catholics, between the promulgation of falsehoods and suppression of truths, this might be justly styled an age of darkness and error. Under the pretext of suppressing popery, laws were passed to prevent education, a measure so opposed to the professed principles of protestantism, that it must seem unaccountable it was not rather censured than approved by those who represented the reformed creed as tolerating, liberal, and enlightening. It was among the charges which the press in those days made against the Catholics, that they read and gave a wrong construction to the bible, yet the very principle of the new doctrine adopted and announced the right of private interpretation of the written word of God, and that it contained all that was necessary to be known, yet the subjects were to be kept illiterate whereby they must be prevented from reading the law, and left open to be influenced

solely by the opinion of others. Elizabeth's first proceeding, after she attained to power, was to cause all the institutions of Mary on the subject of heresy, to be annulled, and others to be enacted quite as exceptionable, the mean difference consisted in this, Mary persecuted Protestants, Elizabeth persecuted Catholics.

The biographers of Elizabeth represent her as a model of human perfection, and her reign one most glorious for England : it was not altogether so. She lived unmarried, and would not listen to council on this head, but her shameless amours with several of the nobility and gentlemen of her court, the most remarkable of any in Europe for the dissoluteness of its practices, became so notorious that even her flatterers could not but condemn them, and some of those who revelled in its wantonness even boasted of their excesses, to such a degree did the beastly gallantry of Elizabeth's court arrive. In fact, the queen set the example, her paramours and their minions followed it up. The remainder of her *real* character too well corresponded with that just mentioned, she was proud, haughty, and overbearing, fond of flattery, dress, and costly attendance on her person ; vain, she was an egotist, fond of displaying her accomplishments, she sought from her subjects a semi-adoration ; envious, she could not bear a rival, the beauty of Mary queen of Scots was intolerable and led in a great degree to the protracted sufferings and finally to the execution of that princess. Elizabeth was irritable, impatient, and passionate, she cursed, she swore, and even spit upon those about her. Full of her own importance and what she believed due to her exalted station, she required the most passive obedience from her subjects. Those persons immediately engaged about her person seldom failed, when they approached her, to signify their sense of her rank by some act of servile obeisance ; it was even said, that many persons of the lower rank actuated by hope or fear paid her an unbecoming veneration in the open street.

The sovereigns prerogative was, in her mind, so indisputably inherent that she was resolved not only to maintain it, but also, if possible, to exercise it without limit; and it was the understood duty of her friends in parliament, so to maintain it, the servile parliament gratified her almost to her utmost desire, "she possessed (said an intelligent foreigner) by her prerogative whatever was requisite for the government of the realm. She could, at her pleasure, suspend the operation of existing statutes, or issue proclamations which should have the force of law. In her opinion, the chief use of parliaments was to vote money, to regulate the minutiae of trade, and to legislate for individual and local interest."* "It was asserted (says another writer) that the queen inherited both an enlarging and restraining power; by her prerogative she might set at liberty what was restrained by the statute or otherwise, and by her prerogative she might restrain what was otherwise at liberty: that the royal prerogative was not to be canvassed, nor disputed, nor examined, and not even admit of any limitation. That absolute princes *such as the sovereigns of England*, were a species of divinity. That it was in vain to attempt tying the queen's hands by laws or statutes, since by means of her dispensing power, she could loosen herself at pleasure; and that even if a clause should be annexed to a statute excluding her dispensing power, she could *first dispense with the clause, and then with the statute.*"

If powers like these vested in such a woman as Elizabeth produced those "golden days" to England pictured to us by partial writers; if such power in such hands did not produce tyranny in the monarch, and immorality in the people, then it may be said, that unlimited authority in the crown is not dangerous to the governed, although it were placed in the hands

*The extract as quoted here, is taken from a review of Fox's book of Martyrs, by William Eusebius Andrews of London, 1824.

of a ruffian. The reign of Elizabeth produced no argument in support of such a position. However the days might have been "golden" to her favorites, they were to the nation and particularly to her Catholic subjects *inquisitorial* tyrannic, and bloody. A system of espionage, false informations, accredited spies, rewarded apostacy, led the way to arbitrary and unjust imprisonments, to confiscations, torture and death. The judges and magistrates were bribed, and justice laid prostrate at the foot of the throne.

"A foreigner, who had been ambassador in England, informs us, that under Elizabeth the administration of justice was more corrupt than under her predecessors. We have not the means of instituting the comparison. But we know that in her first year the policy of Cecil substituted men of inferior rank in the place of former magistrates; that numerous complaints were heard of their tyranny, peculation and rapacity; and that a justice of peace was defined in parliament to be 'an animal, who, for half a dozen chickens would dispense with a dozen laws:' nor shall we form a very exalted notion of the integrity of the higher courts, if we recollect the judges were removable at the royal pleasure, and that the queen herself was in the habit of receiving, and permitting her favourites and ladies to receive, bribes as the prices of her or their interference in the suits of private individuals.

"Besides the judicial tribunals, which remain to the present day, there were in the age of Elizabeth, several other courts, the arbitrary constitution of which were incompatible with the liberties of the subject; the court of high commission, for the cognizance of religious offences; the court of star-chamber, which inflicted the severest punishments for that comprehensive and undefinable transgression, contempt of the royal authority; and the courts martial, for which the queen, from her hasty and imperious temper, manifested a strong predilection. Whatever could be supposed to have the

“ remotest tendency to sedition, was held to subject
“ the offender to martial law ; the murder of a naval
“ or military officer, the importation of disloyal or
“ traiterous books, or the resort to one place of several persons who possessed not the visible means of
“ subsistence. Thus in 1595, under the pretence that
“ the vagabonds of London were not to be restrained
“ by the usual punishments, she ordered Sir Thomas
“ Wyllford to receive from the magistrates the most
“ notorious offenders, and ‘to execute them upon the
“ gallows according to the justice of martial law.’

“ Another and intolerable grievance was the discretionary power assumed by the queen, of gratifying her caprice or resentment by the restraint or imprisonment of those who had given her offence. Such persons were ordered daily to present themselves before the council till they should receive further notice, or to confine themselves within their own doors, or were given in custody to some other person, or were thrown into a public prison. In this state they remained, according to the royal pleasure, for weeks, or months, or years, till they could obtain their liberty by their submission, or through the intercession of their friends, or with the payment of a valuable composition.

“ The queen was not sparing of the blood of her subjects. The statutes inflicting death for religious opinions have been already noticed. In addition, many new felonies and new treasons were created during her reign ; and the ingenuity of the judges gave to these enactments the most extensive application. In 1595, some apprentices in London conspired to release their companions, who had been condemned by the star-chamber to suffer punishment for a riot ; in 1597 a number of peasants in Oxfordshire assembled to break down inclosures, and restore tillage ; each of these offences, as it opposed the execution of the law, was pronounced treason by the judges ; and both the apprentices in London, and the men of Oxfordshire, suffered the barbarous death of traitors.”

It is not my design to enter into a comprehensive detail of the cruelties committed during the reign of Elizabeth, but my object must fail if I pass them over, in mass, by mere assertion, without authority or particulars. I already noticed the sufferings of the Puritans. I must here add, that the persecution of the Catholics was exceedingly severe, and highly impolitic, betraying in the *wise* and *virtuous* Elizabeth, the double appendage of a bad head and a bad heart. It does not appear that the Catholics had any intention to disturb the queen in her regal authority, nor did they dispute her right to be head of *her* church with which they had no concern. The deposing power, sometimes assumed by the popes, could have no positive influence on British Catholics, because *it is not an article of Catholic faith*; and many are the instances of Catholics rejecting the counsel of popes, when not corresponding with their proper power. The pope did attempt, during this reign, to tamper with the English Catholics, but he failed in shaking Catholic loyalty, they effectually resisted his authority in this instance, they however continued steady to the orthodoxy of their own faith, equally unmoved by the overstretched authority of the head of the Catholic, as by the severe persecution of the head of the Protestant church. This fact should be sufficient to remove any apprehension (if such existed in the mind of the queen) that Catholic loyalty to a protestant government, was inconsistent with the closest adherence to the tenets of the Catholic creed; but persecution entered into the system of this queen's government, and religion was resorted to as a pretext, the fidelity of the Catholic subjects could not be brought fairly in question, and, considering the provocations to violate it, they may be said to have remained obstinately loyal. Writers were employed to defame them, ministers of the gospel inveighed against them from the pulpit, letters were written, and intercepted, perhaps by the writers, to prove meditated plots against the state, they were charged with a design to set the queen of

Scots at liberty, and with the intention of aiding every foreign Catholic prince or power hostile to England, or of whose inimical views any fear was entertained. Persecution towards the Catholic seemed to be administered as a preventive of guilt, and truly severe was the punishment which suspicion inflicted.

Doctor Milnor in alluding to the state of the Catholics during the reign of Elizabeth, says "The conduct of the great body of the Catholics at that period was unrivalled for its fidelity. They saw a princess mount the throne, whose title was invalid by their church law, and whose hostile conduct in their regard they anticipated in idea, without offering the smallest resistance to it. They were then the majority of the nation. Almost all the ancient nobility were of their communion, and the ministry, as it was left by Mary, were all zealous Catholics. Nothing then would have been so easy for them as to have excluded Elizabeth from the succession, if they had copied the example which the Protestants set them at the death of Edward VI. Nevertheless they concurred with firm hands, though with sorrowful hearts, in raising her to the throne, because it was her lawful right. They saw her begin her reign with *violating her coronation oath*, by changing the religion of the kingdom, which had been established in it almost 1000 years before, and which she had sworn to defend; and even with enacting the penalty of death against the profession of it. They experienced pecuniary mulets and corporal punishments, which were multiplied and aggravated, year after year, without number or measure, in order to extirpate them from the land of their nativity; they found themselves, at every turn, accused and punished for *pretended* conspiracies; and what was the most cruel circumstance of all, they perceived innumerable snares and the most scandalous arts of seduction and forgery employed by ministry, to draw as many as possible of their number into *real* ones. In the mean time they were told by the head of their church that they were no longer obliged to obey;

and they beheld the most powerful prince in Europe sending an armament, which passed for *Invincible*, to invade the realm, the success of which would at once have placed them above the heads of their persecutors. Yet, in spite of all this, they continued, priests and laity, when at liberty and when in prison, in their hiding places and under the gallows, to acknowledge the title of their unnatural sovereign, to pray for her prosperity, and to condemn all enterprises to secure their lives and the free exercise of their religion, at the expense of the public peace and of the lawful government."

The queen was said to have shown early proof of her discretion and acuteness in the selection of her ministers. In truth, they were the most profligate she could have chosen. The earl of Leicester, one of the handsomest men in England, owed to his personal beauty, that he became a favorite and minister of the queen. The intercourse between him and the virgin sovereign, was so familiar as to produce rumour very unfavorable to the queen's honour; it was also supposed that a marriage might take place which would elevate the earl to a throne, the countess having died suddenly, as was then well known, by means of his violent abuse of her. The queen it appears was too fond of her liberty: his marriage with the dowager countess of Essex lost him the affections of the queen, he however continued in the ministry. Leicester was a man of great ambition, extravagant in his personal expenses, indifferent to the means however censurable, by which they might be supplied, he was insincere, unprincipled, cruel, and treacherous. If he had religion, it was that of puritanism, but even in this he was more of a hypocrite than a zealot.

Sir William Cecil, principal secretary of state served in various offices during the successive reigns of Henry, Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth, he was a *religious* man, but so complying in his manners, that he concurred, in this respect, with the reigning mon-

arch; whether six or sixty articles were the fashion, Cecil was prompt to adopt the prevailing creed. He was patronised and raised to fortune by the earl of Somerset, the regent of the kingdom during the minority of Edward the Sixth, on the decline of the fortunes of this nobleman, the ungrateful Cecil joined the opposing party, and was chiefly instrumental in bringing his patron to the block. In his public conduct at home, he was cruel and unrelenting; in his official intercourse with foreign powers, he was unsteady and unprincipled; he was as wasteful of the blood of the subject, as he was faithless to all public engagements.

Such were the characters who acted as the counsellors of the queen. From such what could be expected but what did happen.

The first primate after the queen's accession was Parker, a man rigid in exacting conformity to the established worship, and in punishing, by fine and deprivation, all the puritanical clergymen who attempted to innovate any thing in the habit, ceremonies, or liturgy of the church. He died 1575; and was succeeded by Grindal, who, as he himself was inclined to the new sect, was with great difficulty brought to execute the laws against them, or to punish the non-conforming clergy. He declined obeying the queen's orders for the suppression of prophesyings, or the assemblies of the zealots in private houses, which she apprehended had become so many academies of fanaticism; and for this offence she had, by an order of the star chamber, sequestered him from archiepiscopal function, and confined him to his own house. Upon his death, which happened in 1583, she determined not to fall into the same error in her next choice; and she named Whitgift, a zealous churchman, who had already signalized his pen in controversy, and who, having in vain attempted to convince the puritans by argument, was now resolved to open their eyes by power, and by the execution of penal statutes. He informed the queen that all the spiritual authority

lodged in the prelates was insignificant without the sanction of the crown ; and as there was no ecclesiastical commission at that time in force, he engaged her to issue a new one, more arbitrary than any of the former, and conveying more unlimited authority. She appointed forty-four commissioners, twelve of whom were ecclesiastics ; three commissioners made a quorum ; the jurisdiction of the court extended over the whole kingdom, and over all orders of men ; and every circumstance of its authority, and all its methods of proceeding, were contrary to the clearest principles of law and natural equity. The commissioners were empowered to visit and reform all errors, heresies, schisms, in a word, to regulate all opinions, as well as to punish all breach of uniformity in the exercise of public worship. They were directed to make inquiry, not only by the legal methods of juries and witnesses, but by all other ways and means which they could devise, that is, *by the rack, by torture, by inquisition, by imprisonment*. Where they found reason to suspect any person, they might administer to him an oath, called *ex officio*, by which he was bound to answer all questions, and might thereby be obliged to accuse himself, or his most intimate friend. The fines which they levied were discretionary, and often occasioned the total ruin of the offender, the imprisonment, to which they condemned any delinquent, was limited by no rule but their own pleasure. They assumed a power of imposing on the clergy what new articles of subscription, and consequently of faith, as they thought proper. Though all other spiritual courts were subject, since the reformation, to inhibitions from the supreme courts of law, the ecclesiastical commissions were exempted from that legal jurisdiction, and were liable to no control. And the more to enlarge their authority, they were empowered to punish all incests, adulteries, fornications, all outrages, misbehaviours, and disorders in marriage : and the punishments which they might inflict, were according to their wisdom, conscience and discretion.

In a word, this court was a REAL INQUISITION, attended with all the iniquities, as well as cruelties of that tribunal.

The penal laws enacted by the parliaments of Elizabeth would disgrace a Nero, even although one of them had never been put in execution, but, when it is known, that they were all put in execution, what can be said of this persecuting reign but that it was a *bad* one. A digest of the laws against popery published in 1791, by the late Simon Butler an Irish lawyer, presented to the reader a specimen of the most infamous legislation.

It is now impossible to give the number, character, or rank of the sufferers under the laws of Elizabeth. In one account, now before me, it is stated, that upwards of two hundred persons were put to death for professing the Catholic faith, during the last twenty years of the "golden days;" of these, one hundred and forty-two were priests. Ninety priests or Catholic lay persons died in prison, one hundred and five others were sent into exile. Of those who were whipped, fined, or stripped of their entire property, no account pretends to state the number, one hundred Catholic gentlemen were confined at one time in the prisons of Lancaster and Yorkshire for the *crime* of not attending service in the Protestant church. Many or most of these fell victims to the length and severity of their sufferings. A writer gives an account of twelve hundred Catholics who suffered in some shape on account of their religion, before the year 1588.

The Rev. J. Sturges Protestant prebendary of Winchester, England, and Doctor Milner Catholic bishop of London, have written largely on the subject of British persecution, the latter proposes balancing the accounts, with a view of determining on which side the greatest sum of sufferings appears. To my present purpose, it matters not a fig how the account stands, Catholics have persecuted Protestants, and Protestants have persecuted Catholics, both had their bloody inquisitions. Are both ready to allow that

their respective religions had nothing to do in it? I trust they are so. The denial of this would infer that both religions are sanguinary and cruel. If so, it is time we get rid of both. Queen Mary burned the Protestants, and the Catholic prelates Gardner and Bonner stand charged with advising or concurring in the measures. Elizabeth did not use fire in the execution of Catholics, that is did not apply it as Mary did, but she caused or permitted the sentence awarded to high treason to be literally executed on them, they were hung by the neck but not until dead, they were taken down while yet alive, their bowels were ripped out and burned before their face, their heads severed from their bodies, their bodies cut into quarters, and the heads and bodies disposed of as her majesty pleased to direct.

Torture was applied in this and other reigns to Catholic priests and laymen. The priest Campian underwent it several times, until nearly all his bones were dislocated, insomuch that he was unable to raise either hand, and having refused to conform to the established religion, was publicly executed. The protestant prelates, Horne, Cooper, Neale, and Elmer have respectively been zealous persecutors, and the latter frequently attended to the infliction of torture on the prisoners in the tower. Cranmer had been also instrumental in sending several persons to the stake, some of them for denying the real presence in the sacrament, the very act of which he was himself, subsequently, if not previously, *guilty*. He signed the death warrant of Lord Thomas Seymour, during the infant reign of Edward, this was an act of which he might excuse himself, on account of his priestly functions, and which was a violation of them. Cranmer, in this instance, exceeded any act committed by the inquisition in Catholic countries. Whatever may have been the private wish, design, or feeling, of the Catholic ecclesiastics who acted as inquisitors, they had always too much respect for their own character, to avow their having any participation in the senten-

ees or execution of those who come under their cognizance. In fact, no power existed in the Inquisition to order any person to death, that was reserved, in form, if not in fact, for the civil authority.

Among the many persons tortured at this time, was George Throgmorton. His papers were seized, and two letters of a treasonable nature were found among them. He denied any knowledge of them, he was tortured until, maddened by pain, he acknowledged the truth of whatever charge his tormentors choose to bring against him, and, among others, his having written these treasonable letters; he died, protesting he had no knowledge of these papers, and that he believed they were placed in his port-folio, after it was taken from him.* The earl of Leicester was known to have made out a list of persons who were to be prosecuted for heresy or treason. His sudden death, supposed by poison, saved the lives of the intended victims.† This monster, minister and counsellor of the queen, had but just got through the bloody work of despatching a large number of Catholics, when he prepared this new list.

Sir Francis Walsingham, another and the worst of Elizabeth's ministers, was so violent in his hatred of Catholics, that he seldom failed when any of them were brought before him, to insult them with the grossest language, and with accusations which he knew were false; he has even been known to commit unprovoked and illegal assaults on them. This man was

*The reader will probably recollect, that, through similar means, the priest O'Coigley lost his life, a few years ago, at Maidstone, England.

† During the anti-popish administration of the affairs of Ireland, by the vice-king Lord Camden, towards the close of the 18th century, a similar list of Catholic gentlemen was prepared at the castle of Dublin. A change in the British ministry, or rather a temporary suspension of British policy, led to the recall of lord Camden, who was succeeded by the Marquis Cornwallis. In this manner did those devoted Catholics escape the execution of that sentence passed on them in a private conclave, held at the king's castle in the City of Dublin.

the chief manager of those letters and papers, which were, from time to time, made the presumed justification of the persecution, and finally destruction of the unfortunate Mary queen of Scots.

James the First was a prince who possessed some good qualities, but they proved of no avail to England, his heart was not bad, but it became neutralized by the unsoundness or weakness of his head. He was born of Catholic parents, was early instilled with a belief in the orthodoxy of its tenets; and as early impressions are generally lasting, he continued through life strongly biassed in favour of that creed. Had James been as firmly attached to Catholicity, as his mother Mary queen of Scots, he would possibly have disturbed his Protestant subjects, by another persecution of them, this would certainly be the case had he fallen into the councils of any of those overheated or ambitious Catholics, who were too ready to sacrifice every duty of religion and humanity, to ruin their enemies, and exalt themselves, for James wanted the talent to distinguish what was right, and the strength of mind to resist what was wrong. The king took for his adviser, Robert Cecil earl of Salisbury son of Cecil the minister of Elizabeth, a portrait of whom has been given while treating of the government of the virgin queen. The son inherited all the evil propensities of the father; it was not necessary to improve on them, in order to make up the character of a bad man. Such was the inauspicious minister of the first James. This minister Cecil was initiated by his father, into all the *mysteries* of government, he hatched conspiracies, forged letters, matured plots, and seemed a very adept in this kind of government. The most remarkable of these was the gun powder-plot, which he took care should be ascribed solely to the Catholics. James resigned his Catholic subjects to their enemies, eighteen priests and seven laymen were executed for their adherence to the Catholic religion,

and more than a hundred of the clergy exiled, several other excesses against the Catholics filled up the inquisitorial cruelties of this reign.

Charles the First the son and successor of James, next mounted the British throne. This reign was highly disastrous to the Catholics, and the more remarkable, as it was the ungrateful return for the most fervid and constant loyalty. The opposition which Charles experienced from his parliament, and the fatal result to him are pretty generally known. During the struggle which ended by the decapitation of the monarch, the Catholics were close adherents of his cause. During the civil war which raged in his dominions, the Catholics poured out all their force and supplied every means in their power, in defence of the king, they fought his battles, they supplied his pecuniary wants, they bled, they died for him, they literally drained their purses in defence of the throne. Yet this was not due by the Catholics to a prince who commenced his reign by the execution of Catholics, clergy and laity on account of their religion, nor did this persecution cease until, unable either to persecute, or to dispense with the aid of the Catholics, he called on them to take up arms in his defence, a summons which they answered with a promptness which the reader may possibly suppose must have been excited by some other passion than loyalty; no other, however, can be ascribed to it. Charles was neither a wise king nor a good man, he inherited the head of his father but without his heart. The late Henry Grattan hearing a gentleman while in conversation, make use of the words "martyrdom of Charles the First," interrupted him, by observing "He a martyr! He was a martyr to his own crimes." This is a perfect picture of Charles the First, in a single sentence.

Oliver Cromwell, on the death of Charles, grasped the British sceptre, under the title of Protector. If Cromwell had any religion, he was a Puritan, his hypocritical cant became the theme of general conversation. The Catholics had no just claim on his kindness, and, truly, the interregnum was to them a most afflicting scene of persecution. If there be an argument against my position, that the establishment of a bloody Inquisition is not a tenet of the christian religion, it is to be found in the practices and professions of this dissembler; so far did he carry his pretended zeal for religion, that a verse from the psalms of David, was inscribed on his cannon. The conduct of an individual must not be ascribed to an entire sect. Oliver was no Catholic, and certainly the Puritans will not make themselves accountable for his absurdities.

The restoration ought to have brought peace if not favour, to the Catholics. One and all, they were for the restoration. After the battle of Worcester in which the hopes of Charles the Second were totally blasted, he sought safety in concealment. His confidence was placed in the Catholics, and they proved faithful, not only not discovering his places of concealment, but providing them for him. On one occasion, he was introduced by a Catholic priest, to a hiding hole, which the clergyman had provided for his own safety. The restoration was, however, a signal for the persecution of Catholics. Charles had experienced the loyalty of his Catholic subjects in the most trying moments of his life, he experienced the protection and hospitality of foreign Catholics, when he was a houseless exile: gratitude and policy ought at least to render him harmless to them, and that he was not so, is the more surprising, as he imbibed a strong predilection for the Catholic faith during his residence in France, and, as some will have it, before he went there, but he wanted that firmness

necessary to the head of a nation. Left to himself he would incline to justice, but in the leadings strings of others, he suffered himself to be carried in every and any direction—"he never said a wrong thing, nor did a right one."

No sooner had Charles the Second mounted the British throne, than plots and conspiracies were set on foot against the Catholics, and to these the restored monarch lent a too confiding ear. So unblushingly far, was calumny carried against the Catholics, that even the death of Charles the First was attributed to them.

The most remarkable of the plots of this reign, was got up in a very bungling manner by lord Shaftsbury. Credulity ran high when any thing was said prejudicial to the Catholic character, to this is owing perhaps, that any credit was given to the story of this plot, which is generally known as "Oates plot," taking its name from a perjured clergyman who gave evidence concerning it. The villanous conduct of Oates and his associates subsequently appeared in distinct characters, but not until the Catholics suffered the penalty of criminals. Lord Stafford was beheaded and several persons, priests as well as laymen, suffered the usual death of traitors, on this occasion, new penal laws were enacted against Catholics, and the laws in being, as well as those now enacted, put into rigorous force, several Catholics of all ranks and professions were imprisoned, fined, or put to death, for the mere exercise of their religion. As Charles the First coward like signed the death warrant of his favourite though wicked minister Strafford, like manner did Charles the Second surrender to his enemies, the virtuous and innocent viscount Stafford. In nothing is the weakness of this monarch more remarkable than in his permitted persecution of Catholics, while he held at heart the same faith, and actually died in the profession of it.

It is unnecessary to follow up this disgusting detail, by a particular reference to the succeeding reigns of British kings. The spirit and acts of persecution on account of religion continued from reign to reign. The late rejection of the Catholic emancipation bill, is in proof that it yet continues. The spirit in which the hateful laws were enforced, exists, but circumstances have given it a milder aspect, and it may be hoped, that the necessity which imposes forbearance on the advocates of persecution, may grow until the system will fall for want of power to uphold it. What this necessity is, ought not to remain entirely unnoticed although it requires but few words to do so, and although it may already have entered into the observation of every individual concerned.

In the first page of this work, I observed that the press may be compared to a sword, it can attack, it can defend, it can kill, it can save. The press has in no small degree taken the place of the sword every where, and rational argument is substituted for brutal force; in such a contest, justice will prevail, and is prevailing. The reign of George the Third was that which gave relief to the Catholic, a prince, as prejudiced, as bigotted, and naturally as weak and as obstinate as any that preceded him, has the *merit* of liberality to his Catholic subjects. The truth is, the press, which from being like a grain of mustard seed, has grown into a tree, bore, in this reign, a certain kind of forbidden fruit. The American colonists tasted largely of it, and Irish Catholic emancipation was literally sown and ripened in a foreign land, and at the distance of three thousand miles from Ireland. The tree of liberty is not indigenous, it is the boon of providence, a plant congenial to every soil, Lafayette carried a sprig of the tree to his native country, France; it there produced another crop of Irish emancipation, and, had the councils of Fayette prevailed, the world had ere now been free, but nipping ambition injured the budding blossom, and France herself lost sight of liberty, it blazed on the land, but a flit-

ting cloud obscured it, faction and division distracted and weakened the national energies, and Bonaparte stepped in to the relief of France, but yet to the restraint of liberty. There are disorders which require desperate remedies, such was that which led to the entry and exit of Bonaparte ; some of the best men in France hailed him, even while he grasped the throne, as the only man who could save the nation, from the danger of popular excesses ; the purest patriotism stepped forward in his behalf, as the only expedient to keep from France the melancholy prospect, that the country might again fall a prey to a restored Bourbon. Louis the eighteenth did however remount the French throne, the people of France are now suffering the penalty of revolutionary indiscretions, and the Catholics of Ireland must wait in chains, until another popular movement, at home or abroad, will again wring from their oppressor one more *concession*.

Bonaparte was a tyrant, but of a new kind ; for, compared with his cotemporary kings, he was even an apostle of liberty ; he mistook a false glory for his country's good, and in search of renown, he travelled out of the road to equal rights, he was however grossly libelled, even by those who admired what he professed to support, monarchy. Bonaparte established liberty of conscience wherever his arms could prevail, he broke down the Inquisition in Spain, he gave liberty of conscience, protection, and even favour, to the persecuted Protestants of France. It is not true that he adopted a variety of creeds, he did not become a proselyte to any, nor was he a hypocrite in any, unless possibly in that one which he openly professed, and in which he was educated. He was disposed to allow to all as much liberty of conscience, as was, in his mind, compatible with the security of the civil government : he would admit as much republicanism as could breathe the same air with the king. A republican king is not an absolute paradox : Bonaparte would be a king, and would, perhaps, rather destroy

liberty, than be deprived of his crown, it was his wish however, to reign over a happy, and, as nearly as was consistent with his ambition, over a free people. He gave to France, the admirable "Code Napoleon," the old aristocracy suffered by his administration, but the helot-peasantry were raised into a proud and respectable yeomanry. He ruined hundreds, but he left France better than he found it.

That the protection of religion was but the pretext for committing the shameful and sinful enormities of the civil governments of Europe, is a fact which might be collected from a very superficial acquaintance with history; that religion could have no hand in it is written in almost every line of holy writ. British history abundantly maintains my position. Were it necessary to go into the utmost minutiae to support a plain truth, I would spread before my reader, the entire history of Ireland,* both before and since its unhappy connexion with Britain; the former would show, that Christianity in the early ages of it had no inquisitions, with a view to destroy men for their religious opinions; the latter period would satisfy every reader, that persecution for conscience sake, is a modern as it is a vicious institution. Although I cannot here enter into a detailed history of that country, the birth place of so large a portion of the white natives of the United States of America, yet it seems necessary to my subject, that I take a rapid glance at it.

* A history of Ireland written by a suitable person, in this country, would be a valuable acquisition to literature, the statesman and politician would find in it a useful lesson; such a history could not fail to throw great light on my subject, but it would swell this little work, beyond the limits to which, for various reasons, I must confine myself. Mr. Mathew Carey of Philadelphia, has done much towards drawing Ireland's picture. The author of "*Vindiciæ Hibernicæ*," cannot employ his pencil more usefully to the public, or more honourably to himself, than by continuing his labours on a portrait so well suited to his industry, his talents, and his patriotism.

The injustice of Britain towards the people of Ireland, was intended to bear retrospectively on that nation, by destroying all records of its history, and substituting fiction and falsehood. Enough however has survived the intended wreck of its name, to show, beyond doubt, that Ireland was a land of civilization and of letters, of science and the arts, long before England was known in any similar degree, nay, before the time when Cæsar characterized the Britons, as "*ferros inhospitesque*." It is not my intention to aver that the British were as thus described, I am disposed to make every allowance for the circumstance, that the authority is that of an enemy, but I must say, that after civilization had far progressed, and even at this day, the people of Ireland might, in reference to the treatment they did and do receive, apply Cæsar's words, to the British government, and in too great a degree, to the British people.

The Scottish* inhabitants of Ireland, were the descendants of the ancient Iberian Spaniards. The Spaniards by their constant intercourse with the Phœnicians got an early knowledge of letters. The Egyptians also a learned people, made several incursions into Spain, the disturbed state of which induced the Iberian Spaniards, who had settled in the North of Spain, to emigrate. This being resolved on, one of their number, named Ithy, was sent at the head of an exploring party in search of a more convenient land, these Spaniards reached Ireland, where, in a conflict with the inhabitants, Ithy was slain: his corpse was carried to Spain by his associates. This act of barbarity so incensed the Spaniards, that the thoughts of foreign settlement gave way to revenge. It was resolved to make war on the murderers of Ithy. Shortly after, one hundred and twenty ships arrived from Spain on the coast of Ireland, with troops, under the

* The reader must not be led into the belief that the name of "Scotia," or the designation of "Scottish," is borrowed from Scotland, the fact is that North Britain got the name of "Scotia minor," from Ireland the "Scotia major" or "antiqua."

command of the sons of Milesius. The contest was of short duration, the barbarous inhabitants submitted : some of them were received into the favour of the conquerors, and, benefitting by their instruction, became an enlightened people. The new settlers brought with them the use of letters which they continued to cultivate with great assiduity and success.

The Milesian Irish, as they have been designated after their migration, were a martial, humane, brave, and hospitable people. The Irish government as established by them, was monarchical, but the monarch was *elective* out of the Milesian family, a popular council kept a restraining hand over any ambitious views that might be discovered in the monarch, a senatorial order, was instituted as a check on both, so that the extremes of regal power, and of popular excesses, might be guarded against, that the one might not become tyranic, or the other licentious. The three orders were elective, the sessions and the election of deputies were triennial. The pretension to arrive at the crown must be grounded on a name established by tried talents, superior virtue, abilities, military courage, and a knowledge of the laws and constitution. Hereditary orders of government were unknown, and the spirit of the time was decidedly opposed to their introduction. That learning should rapidly advance, as it did, must have been the case, where ignorance was never elevated to rank, and where merit was the surest passport to office. The Irish gave strong evidences of submissiveness and of obstinacy, in their ready and almost general conversion to Christianity in the fifth century, and their adherence to it, as then taught, during the succeeding period of thirteen hundred years even to this time ; in both instances, I think it may be said, they discovered an inherent virtue of the highest order.

Education in Ireland was of the most refined order then known in the world, they brought a knowledge of letters from Spain, to which place they were conveyed from the most learned nations extant : while

their neighbours were enveloped in barbarous ignorance, or had but a scarcely dawning light, the people of Ireland reaped the fruits of a highly polished education. The Irish schools and seminaries became objects of great interest, whether considered in reference to their number, their size, their many students, their courses of study, or the hospitality with which foreigners, who resorted to them, were received and instructed without charge. In short Ireland became the freeschool of Europe, and particularly of the neighbouring island of Britain. The return which the latter made for the important favours thus conferred, may be gleaned from the history of both countries, for the last seven centuries.

A writer on the ancient history of Ireland to whom I am principally indebted for the observations respecting that island, which I have here endeavoured to compress, thus expresses himself. "A subject like this I am now upon, is very well worth the pains of an able writer; few subjects deserve to be better known, since we so rarely meet with the history of a free and learned people, and find so little instruction in that of any other. Their constitution, as we have observed, was founded originally upon democratic principles; and on the proper equilibrium of the prime contending orders depended the safety and due œconomy of the whole system. In the hands of able and uncorrupt governors, this scheme was practicable enough, notwithstanding the difficulties we have enumerated. The christian religion brought it additional and great strength. It instructed the people in the true measures of obedience, and the governors in the true use of their authority; it renewed and consolidated the principles of virtue, and consequently those of the constitution; when it attempts the reverse of this, it is not christian, but *occasional* and *factionous* religion. The popes and missionaries of that age made no attempts upon civil liberty, whatever those of later times might have essayed. Their kingdom was not of this world, and they sought nothing but the peace

and salvation of those to whom it belonged. They conducted this great work by the means of persuasion and good example, the only manner in which it can be conducted ; they should frustrate the ends of true religion, and deviate from the precepts of their divine master, had they conducted it in any other. It were to be wished that this was still the case, without temporal rewards to allure, incapacities to corrupt, and inquisitions to torture men into the true religion ; and until this is the case, until government desists from the encouragement of apostacy, and consequently of every kind of hypocritical immorality, it will be burlesque to talk of liberty in the sense that the wise ancients understood it : on any other terms, sacred freedom is, in fact, but a mere monopoly, and the property only of those, who are compelled to come in." And again, says the same historian. " In those days, neither occasional nor local christianity was a standard to determine how far men (men obedient to the established government) ought to enjoy or forfeit natural rights ; they were not punished in proportion to the supposed evils of their ecclesiastic systems, but in proportion to their real transgressions against that peace of government which true christianity recommends. The religion of the first missionaries was a summary of union and harmony ; its principles were worthy its divine original, and taught mankind to love and succour, not to divide, hate and destroy, one another. This is, in brief, an idea of it ; but if more were necessary, the conduct of the clergy, and the extraordinary learning and sanctity of our monastic orders, would finish the picture : these persons were true apostolic teachers ; and although, as before observed, the ecclesiastics were admitted to a share in the legislative government ; yet their power never amounted to any thing near that clerical tyranny and unexampled prostitution so much complained of, in these latter times. I do not detract from the exemplary and meritorious conduct of those ancient and pious teachers of christianity : but if ever, (at any one

particular time) they attempted to get a share of power in Ireland, incompatible with liberty, they certainly failed in the acquisition. They kept themselves, or they were kept, within their proper ecclesiastic departments; nor would this knowing and free people admit them to be the trampers, any more than they were the creatures, of the civil power. We can hardly be brought to think, but that the austerities, mortifications and edifying charity of those first ages of the Scottish church, were a sufficient security against all ecclesiastic invasions. Where gospel-authority *alone* is exercised, little is to be feared from the clergy; they do the state the greatest service, and they merit the highest reverence from it: but when they turn candidates for the dignities, that is, the pageantry, distinctions and opulence of their professions; when they renounce the world, *to grasp at it the more surely*; when they pander for preferment, at the expense of decency, integrity and christianity; when, in short, they lead the most luxurious lives, and proudly cushion themselves up from the labours of any true pastoral duty; *then, and then only*, it may be dreaded, that their share in the legislature of their country may become unconstitutional; and consequently their conduct as dangerous to liberty, as to christianity. That all this was not the case in Ireland; and that the spiritual had no collision with the civil power, we are assured, not only by our native historians, but by the consent of foreign writers, who singularly celebrate the ancient Scots for the retention of their religion, upon the true principles and firm foundation of primitive christianity."

Will those who cry out that the establishment of the Inquisition in Catholic countries, was conformable to a tenet of that religion, continue to say so, in the face of this evidence, that the early missionaries made no pretensions to such powers, and hinted at no such doctrine? Had not ambition, taking advantage of the factious disputes which weakened or suspended the energies of Ireland, in the twelfth century,

introduced a political plague, that island, the people of which better understood what constituted liberty, and enjoyed it longer, than any other cotemporaneous nation, would never have experienced the inquisitorial laws, which has, and now, there regulates religion by sanguinary inflictions, and enforces its observance by fire and sword. The many unroofed monuments of piety and letters, the ivyed walls of which withstand the ravages of time, are in themselves a melancholy history of the gothic vandalism with which Ireland had been visited, and which continues an enfeebling incubus to oppress and ruin it.

The obstinacy with which the Irish people adhered to the divine religion as revealed to them, is not more remarkable than that with which they retained their language, the same they brought with them from Spain, one thousand years before the christian era, and those customs which are in themselves a strong proof of their antiquity, and the descent of the inhabitants, also that peculiar characteristic which distinguishes them as a people different from any other inhabiting the north of Europe. There are, at this day, many of the unmixed descendants of the original emigrants, who speak the Irish language with a purity which is extraordinary, and understand no other; the constitutional love of letters which was the ornament of their free ancestors, continues unabated in their enslaved children: it is not, at least was not uncommon some years ago, to see the barefooted youth of the south and west of Ireland, capable of addressing their booted masters, in two languages, to which the upstart foreigners were often strangers, pure latin, and Irish not less pure. Those of the Milesian Irish whose fortunes enabled them to acquire the highest degree of the smuggled education of the country, have wonderfully excelled the *privileged* scholars, and, in their frequent visits to, and residences in foreign countries, have signalized themselves, so as to draw forth the respect and admiration of every stranger, *on whom the English Enemy was unable to engraft a hatred for*

the Irish character. The Irish gentleman and scholar, whether in the field, the pulpit, or the forum, whether in the presence of kings, or in the social circle of his equals, retains and displays the great characteristics of his ancestors, he is brave, he is eloquent, he is patriotic, he is noble, and unawed by any presumed superiority, he is quick of apprehension, full of wit and expedient. The poorer man displays his share of the national trait. Long grinding persecution has in some instances nearly annihilated the proper character; but even these, while they but show what long continued slavery may effect, are objects more of sympathy than of contempt. The poor oppressed Irishman, bounding on his native hills, or engaged in the gambols of his native vallies, often feels a happiness, to which the oppressor is a stranger, and it is in these moments he displays those qualities which distinguished his ancestors, now they appear hereditarily inherent, and indelible. The national hospitality, never dead, assumes a renovated vigor, when, forgetting his sorrows, he enjoys a momentary although but an ideal gleam of freedom. Driven from their country, Irishmen have not failed to signalize themselves in foreign lands, by acts of splendid bravery and good faith. British influence wherever it can reach (and may it not tarry in America) will overshadow and obscure those traits, and, urged on by envy and malice, will defame and bring into contempt a people who deserve a better treatment. The Irish character will outlive this unprovoked enmity, future generations will do justice to Irish merit, and admire the properties which constituted the nation's pride, "future history will sprinkle its fairest flowers over them, and posterity will not cease to admire what they will reckon it their greatest glory to imitate."

This allusion to Irish history and character may seem impertinent to my subject, the exile in America would surely pardon the digression, if it be one, the American will, on reflection, see that it is not absolutely inapplicable, that a useful lesson may be drawn

from a view of man prosperous and happy in the enjoyment of rational liberty, wretched and degraded when deprived of it; that liberty finding security in the purity of religion, and never in such imminent danger as when worldly ambition regulates the bible by civil decrees. We have already seen that the early church missionaries propagated their doctrine in Ireland by mild persuasion; the Irish people were then free. An inroad was indeed made on that freedom while the oppressor and oppressed yet kneeled at the one altar, but the violence of persecution never received its most woeful sharpness, until religious zeal, real or pretended, mistaken or assumed, dipped its hands in blood, substituted compulsion for persuasion, and elementary fire for the usual arms of the church, remonstrance, and, as the last resort, excommunication.

We have seen what continued persecution reigned in England under the pretext of promoting religion, what inquisitions were instituted, what tortures were resorted to, what fines, forfeitures, banishments, imprisonments, and barbarous executions! but these were comparatively trifles; Ireland was the theatre on which persecution raged on the great scale, where British persecution scowled throughout the land, where fire and faggot ruined and had nigh exterminated the inhabitants, where priest turned soldier, and soldier turned devil, where religion became frenzy, and humanity cannibalism, until artificial savagery improved upon the worst qualities of nature, until heaven blushed as it looked on the pulpit and the preacher.

In England, the Protestant it is true persecuted the Catholic as he did the Protestant, but there the sectarian found relief in conformity, there the unreformed Catholics were not many, persecution was limited by the fewness of the obstinate, it was often arrested for want of objects on which to prey. Not so with Ireland. The Irish Catholic was steady to his faith, and dearly he paid for his nonconformity. His lands were seized and given to murdering soldiers and fo-

reign harpies, strange vultures swallowed his property and plundered his substance, the seeds of unnatural disunion were sown on the land, where a Saint Patrick found materials so easily moulded into the most exalted virtue, the religion he so successfully planted was proscribed, and its observance forbidden, legislation assumed the most fiendlike aspect, morality was torn up by the root, and as far as possible, extinguished; to be a "mere Irishman" was a sin to be washed away only in the blood of the victim. The wealth of the land was wasted on the demoralization of the inhabitants, robbery was sanctioned by law, filial disobedience encouraged, apostacy rewarded, and perjury made the road to honours and to riches. The whole face of things was changed, and changed for the worse. Such were the consequences of British rule in Ireland; and these arose from an attempt to compel the inhabitants to adopt a religion delivered to them in a strange tongue, and by a stranger whose conduct was marked by a violence and ferocity, not calculated to conciliate, but rather to exasperate.

I may possibly, hereafter, undertake such a view of Irish events as may enable the American, at a small expense, to learn something of the history of a nation so cruelly aspersed, and the true character of a people so shamefully libelled by prejudiced and hired writers. Mr. Carey's *Vindiciæ Hibernicæ* is full and conclusive on this, and I cannot in justice to that enlightened Irishman, do less than invite the public to give his work a general and attentive perusal. So far as I shall further treat the subject at present, and I must be very concise and incomplete, I will draw for my information, principally on Mr. Carey's work. Mr. Carey prepares his readers by the following introductory observations.

"The history of Ireland is almost one solid mass of falsehood and imposture, erected, particularly during the seventeenth century, on the basis of fraud and perjury; fraud and perjury so obvious, so stupid and so flagitious, that, to the most superficial observer,

it must be a subject of inexpressible astonishment how it ever gained currency."

"Nevertheless from such foul and polluted sources alone, the knowledge of that history is derived by nine tenths of those who have condescended to study it: and however extravagant it may appear, it is nevertheless a serious truth, that a large portion even of those who pride themselves on their literary acquirements, are almost as ignorant of the affairs of Ireland, from the twelfth to the eighteenth century, as of those of Arabia or Japan."

"The terrific tales that are recorded of the events of the civil war in 1641, have sowed and still continue to sow a copious seed of the most vulgar and rancorous prejudices in the mind of man against his fellow man, which have sprouted forth with most pernicious luxuriance, and soured in the breasts of many the sweet milk of human kindness towards those with whom they are in daily habits of association."

"Many of those prejudices have been transplanted from their native soil by emigrants* and have taken root in this country, (the United States of America,) notwithstanding the general liberality of the age. It is true, however, that their range is confined, and their influence inconsiderable. Nevertheless, the erroneous impressions respecting Irish affairs are universal here, from the *corrupt* sources whence her heart rending story is derived."

Robbery, and not religious zeal, was the propelling motive of the oppressors of Ireland. To afford a pretext for fraud and plunder, every device was set on foot to instigate rebellion, or induce individuals to commit treason, no matter how ill, or imperfectly they succeeded, no matter how confined the rebellion, how few the criminals, it yet justified the most extensive

* It is true, as stated by Mr. Carey, that prejudices have been carried across the Atlantic, by emigrants. But the whole truth would be better told, were it added, that the British government and British emissaries had a large share in the attempt of poisoning the minds of the Americans.

confiscations, the most rapacious robberies : nay, although the plan had altogether failed, although no rebellion could be excited, although no treason had been committed, yet some professional perjurer, or some secret inquiry and sealed report, furnished what could not be otherwise procured. Ireland is in extent about two-thirds of the size of the state of New-York, or Pennsylvania, the confiscations of landed property amounted nearly to the entire and would appear to have exceeded it, this however arose from some parts being more than once confiscated. The confiscated estates of the Earl of Desmond were nearly 600,000 acres ; those of Tyrone and Tyrconnel about 500,000 ; the confiscations, after the subjugation of Ireland by Cromwell, were above 6,000,000 acres, and those after the final defeat of king James' adherents, probably, 1,500,000.*

Out of those perjuries, arose a London company with a capital of one million of pounds, or such part thereof as would be necessary, to procure the confiscation of ten millions of the lands held by the Catholics of Ireland. The English parliament saw the reasonableness of the proposal, and enacted a law accordingly, reserving to the crown a perpetual rent.

The attainder of individuals was a very convenient mode of coming at property.

“ The most usual means of accomplishing the nefarious purpose of confiscating estates in Ireland, were :

“ 1. By implicating the nobility and gentry in some fictitious plot, and citing them to appear before the deputies ; if they appeared, seizing them, and trying them by *martial law*, or by a jury *packed* for the purpose, or acting under the dread of corporal or other punishment, if their verdict did not quadrate with the views of the government.

“ 2. If they did not appear, as was often the case, in consequence of the perfidy so frequently experienced by those who ventured to comply with the

requisition, regarding their non-appearance as a confession of guilt, declaring them traitors, and overturning and seizing their territories.

“Recourse in both cases, was generally had to acts of attainder for the confiscation of the estates of the parties.

“An act of attainder is a tremendous instrument of *persecution* and destruction.* There are few conceivable cases, in which it can be used, without manifest injustice and oppression. As it is enacted by the highest authority in the state, there lies *no appeal* against its overwhelming operation, however atrociously wicked.

Under the pretext of *civilizing* the Irish Catholics, foreign barbarians preyed on their property: to reduce the “savages to order and subjection,” they were driven from their comfortable abodes and fair lands, to “nestle in filthy cottages” on those scanty portions of unprofitable lands which were assigned them. This nestling in filthy cottages, which, if true, is so only in reference to their state *after* they were despoiled of their lands, is, by the British historian, made the motive and justification for the despoiling. With such *humane* views, king James robbed his Irish subjects in King’s and Queen’s counties, in Leitrim, Longford, and Westmeath, of their rightful estates, to the amount of three hundred and eighty-two thousand acres. He had already plundered the inhabitants of Ulster of their property, and sent the proprietors into ruin and the utmost distress.

“To bring the matter home to an American reader, let us suppose a descendant of William Penn, settled on the rich lands in Lancaster, Chester, or Delaware county, (Pennsylvania) and owning one thousand acres, worth one hundred dollars per acre,

*The reader will bear in mind that all this is an inquisitorial system for the suppression of popery and heresy, all done under the pretext that it was for the “glory of God.”

expelled from thence because he built no houses, nor planted orchards or gardens, banished to some of the barren lands in Northumberland or Lycoming, receiving in lieu of his paternal estate, two hundred and fifty acres, scarcely worth two dollars per acre, thus receiving five hundred dollars as an equivalent for a hundred thousand. This is a fair view of the equitable doctrine of *equivalents*, as studied and carried into practice by those upright agents of the pious James.”*

Catholics were disqualified by law from purchasing, or even holding by lease, any of the confiscated lands.

Another species of robbery arose from fines. It was required of every subject to attend divine worship in the established church, on every Sunday, under a penalty, which gave employ, in the collection of it, to the Protestant collectors, during the other six days of the week. The aggregate amount of the fines was enormous, and sufficient in itself to beggar many of the poorer class of the community, and was oppressive and vexatious to the wealthy.

A Catholic could not own a horse of a greater value than five pounds : a Protestant might seize any horse found in the possession of a Catholic, on paying for the same the utmost value fixed by the law, five pounds. I have heard it said, but as I do not now recollect the source of my information, I will not vouch for its authenticity, that a Protestant having seized a horse of great value and tendered five pounds which was refused, he carried off the animal, and was prosecuted as a robber, because he also carried off the saddle and bridle : the robber escaped the punishment due to his crime, being acquitted by a *packed jury*. As the law stood, a Catholic could not be impannelled on a jury to decide any matter in dispute between a Catholic and Protestant.

A Sheriff is a very important officer, he having the impannelling of juries. In Ireland, the Sheriffs are

* Carey.

appointed by the king, and must not be Catholics. The insecurity which this creates, whenever a Catholic is a party in a civil suit, is evident. The danger to Protestant and Catholic in criminal prosecutions, where the king is always a party, and often a vindictive one, is equally evident. The property of the Catholic was in every form so prostrate at the foot of the throne, and so much within the grasp of the king, that the Catholic could not be said to hold it except by royal sufferance, it was mercy that permitted him to exist—this is not fiction nor exaggeration. A judge seated on an Irish bench, has been heard to say, that the law did not recognize the existence of a Catholic, and that he should not complain while permitted to breathe. A loyal sheriff created for the purpose of packing a loyal jury, was an effectual mode of dispossessing the Catholic of his property. The jury which would dare to be just, would be punished by fine and imprisonment. So much for the insecurity of property under the inquisitorial laws for the suppression of popery in Ireland.

In order to provide effectually for the continued enslavement of the Irish Catholic, it was necessary to put a stop to the progress of education, to engraft ignorance on the nation. The laws were apparently very effectual for this purpose, but such has always been, and such continues to this day, the desire of the Irish native to acquire literary information, that, at every hazard, he sought it where he could find it, in the munificence of foreign monarchs, in the humble unlicensed hedge-school of his own country, in the hiding places, where proscribed piety raised the soul to God, and initiated the pupil into the use of the alphabet, where the humble priest, unobserved by the inquisitors, performed the ceremonies of the altar on Sunday, and taught religion, morality, and the use of letters to “little ones”* during the other

* How differently were the “little ones” of Ireland treated by the bloody invaders. Sir Charles Coote (a name well remem-

days of the week. Some of the most learned of men received their earliest instruction in these humble seminaries, but even these were not always protected by their lowliness, their tutors became objects of direct persecution, and the infant learners were made to feel the weight of the law.

“If any papist (said the law) shall publicly teach school, or instruct youth in learning in any private house, or shall be entertained to instruct youth, as usher or assistant to any Protestant school-master, he shall be esteemed a Popish regular clergyman, and prosecuted as such, and shall incur such penalties and forfeitures as any Popish regular convict is liable unto.”

We will, just now, see what these penalties were. “Draco, barbarous and cruel as he was, in his sanguinary code, which punished all crimes with death, has never been accused of punishing any thing but crimes. But the worse than Draconian Irish legislature denounced banishment, and, in case of return, death, against any Catholic guilty of the *offence* of teaching school, instructing children in learning, in a private house, or officiating as usher to a Protestant school master.”*

Each and every person who encouraged or advised any youth to pass beyond sea for the purpose of education, as well as the person who contributed to his support while abroad, were punishable for the *offence*,

bered and justly detested in Ireland) gave orders to his soldiers not to spare the smallest child. This horrid principle too generally prevailed, the little ones suffered in the indiscriminate massacres which took place at Drogheda, Wexford, and in many other places. On one occasion, three children were taken from a pregnant woman, whose womb was ripped open for the purpose; the little ones were stuck on spears, and thus exposed to public view. Many an innocent babe in like manner perished, the ferocious *loyalists* punished by anticipation, those who, if left to live, might possibly become rebels. “Nits (said the murderers) will be lice.” Does not this out herod Herod?

* Carey.

and the personal and real estate of such youth, or to which he might become heir or owner, was to be forfeited to the king. His absence was *prima facie* evidence that he was so, for the purpose of education, and it rested with him to prove the negative. He was liable to punishment for acquiring such foreign education, should the same be proven after his return, although he had been sent abroad while yet under the tender age of seven years, and although he had attained the age of seventy before his return.

What a melancholy reverse for Ireland, and how barbarous the policy, how inglorious the conduct which would destroy literature and its legitimate offspring liberty, to raise on its tomb, a superstructure of immorality, peculation, pride, and slavery. Ireland which Dean Prideaux said had been the *prime seat of learning to all Christendom*, was now to become the very seat of ignorance, at least so far as the power of the invader could so make it. That "*insula sanctorum et doctorum*" in which "true learning and true religion flourished together," was to be the home of the savage, (if bad laws could succeed in rendering men savage,) it was to become the domicil of the hypocrite, the perjurer, and the blasphemer, and the nursery of crime and apostacy, if the law which permitted the one and rewarded the other, could give growth to these first fruits of the attempts to *civilize* the people of Ireland. What a contrast Ireland as she *was*, presents, when compared with what she became under the British government. For about fifteen hundred years, from the Milesian migration to the introduction of revealed religion, the Irish people were ardent and successful cultivators of letters and the arts, they were a polished, martial, brave, and generous people, practiced in eloquence and lovers of poetry and music, they were, more than any other people in Europe lovers of liberty, and they understood it better than any of their neighbours. The spirit of the Gospel, which was conveyed to Ire-

land later than it had been to the neighbouring island of Britain, tended to give a new impulse to the happy genius of the people.

“ That doctrine took place in Ireland in the fifth century ; and none succeeded more in the spreading of it than Patrick, a native of Britain, and a Roman Catholic Missionary ; he and his disciples in a few years converted the whole nation : so rapid a progress was perhaps, never known in any other land : and if it be true, as undoubtedly it is, that christianity got the least opposition from the learned and polite nations, its great success in Ireland will, on that score, be the less to be wondered at. Heathen darkness vanished at the dawn of truth enlightened by the virtues of its preachers. The country was filled with bishops, priests and religious houses : the Monks spread themselves over the whole face of it, and no other part of Europe was celebrated more for the sanctity and learning of its several monastic orders. These great men set up in recluse places, which they cleared of woods, cultivated them with their own hands, and in the course of time rendered them the most delightful spots in the kingdom. They well deserved the perpetual possession of lands purchased at such expense. Their deserts became cities, and gave rise to them :* here they set up schools, in which they educated the youth, not only of the Island, but of most parts of Europe, in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and of polite literature. They fasted and prayed without intermission ; and preached more by their example than by precept itself. They sent their missionaries in shoals into the continent, to convert its heathen and confirm its christian inhabitants ; set up schools in those parts, and laid the foundations of the most flourishing universities in Europe. They taught the Saxons, Danes and Picts the use of letters ; and converted the latter to christianity, by the preaching of Columb-Kille, who quitted his right of

* Alas ! These cities have again become deserts.

accession to the crown of Ireland, for a more permanent one, in the habit of a poor monk. When Europe groaned under the weight of Gothic tyranny, Ireland, as the judicious Doctor Prideaux observes, became the *prime seat of learning to all Christendom*: hither sciences fled for protection, and here its followers and professors were amply supported and generously maintained. For the converted Saxons, this great people erected the famous college of Mayo in the west of Ireland, called to this day, Mayo of the Saxons. Here Alfred and other princes received their Education. In our city of Armagh, it is affirmed that no fewer than 7000 scholars studied at the same time in its university;* although the kingdom was then spread with many other academies equally celebrated, if not equally numerous. On this foundation did they cultivate knowledge and christianity, both at home and abroad; and thus did they fulfil the glorious commission given by our Saviour to the Apostles, *Go ye, and teach all nations.*”

Behold the reverse of this picture. The monks were driven from their dwellings, the seminaries were destroyed, the students dispersed, the arts and sciences laid prostrate, commerce discouraged, and a wilderness of slavery grew up, where genius had been cultivated, where politeness was the common and studied accomplishment. Oh, what an ungrateful return from Britain, whose ALFRED received his education at the college of Mayo. “Perhaps, Alfred was the greatest man ever lived. What writer of eminence, whether poet, lawyer, or historian, has not selected him as the object of highest praises? As king, as soldier, as patriot, as lawgiver, in all his characters he is by all, regarded as having been the greatest, wisest, most virtuous.”†

* This is a greater number of students than any one literary institution in the British dominions can now boast of; and more than are contained in all the charter-schools of Ireland.

† Cobbet.

The suppression of literature was well calculated to promote immorality, but the Godly government was not willing to entrust the growth of this evil to the mere influence of ignorance, a hatred of popery suggested the enactment of special laws on this head.

“After the first of May 1746, every marriage celebrated by a Popish priest, between a Papist and any person who had been, or hath professed himself or herself to be a Protestant, at any time within twelve months of such celebration of marriage, or between two Protestants, shall be null and void to all intents and purposes, without any process, judgment, or sentence of the law whatever.”

“The eldest son (of a Papist) conforming (to the Protestant religion) immediately acquires and in the life time of his father, the permanent part, what our law calls the reversion and inheritance of the estate, and he discharges it by retrospect; and annuls every sort of voluntary settlement made by the father ever so long before his conversion. This he may sell or dispose of immediately, and alienate it from the family for ever.”*

“No Papist, after the 20th January, 1695, shall be capable to have, or keep in his possession, or in the possession of any other, to his use, or at his disposition, any horse, gelding, or mare. of the value of five pounds or more; and if any person of the Protestant religion, shall make discovery thereof upon oath, to any two justices of the peace, or to the chief magistrate of any city or town corporate, they may within their respective limits, by warrant under their hands and seals, authorize such person, in the day-time only, to search for and secure all such horses: and in case of resistance, to break open any door, and bring such horse or horses before them; and such discoverer (being of the Protestant religion) paying or making tender, before such justice, mayor, &c. of

the sum of five pounds five shillings, to the owner or possessor of such horse, after such payment, or tender and refusal, the property of such horse or horses, shall be vested in the person making such discovery and tender, as if the same had been bought and sold in market overt."

These, I say, are laws of immorality ; the Protestant will not say that they are laws of religion. The sacred institution of marriage is declared a nullity, and its offspring legitimate in the eyes of heaven, is, by the inquisitorial, anti-popish, and sacrilegious laws of Ireland, bastardized. The son is incited to rebel against his parent, and his rebellion is applauded and rewarded. The law of the Catholic and of the Protestant says "honour thy father and thy mother," but the human edict made for the suppression of popery, and, professedly, for the promotion of Protestantism, says, son, deny the faith of thy parent, and become the proprietor of his estate. Nothing so abominable as this, has ever been committed by, or even imputed to, the Spanish Inquisition. The authority which vests in one man the right to seize and keep another's horse against the owner's consent, and at less than a fair valuation, legalizes robbery ; and may, with equal justice, be extended to all species of property, and at any price however low. Why the Irish legislature confined the right to that of robbing the neighbour of his horse, I know not. I am not engaged in theological controversy, and will leave to others to settle the point ; whether the law, "*dato Cæsari, que sunt Cæsaris*," applies in this case.

"All Popish archbishops, bishops, vicars-general, deans, jesuits, monks, friars, and all other regular popish clergy, and all Papists exercising any ecclesiastical jurisdiction, shall depart this kingdom, before the 1st of May, 1693. And if any of them shall be, at any time after the said day, within this kingdom, they shall be imprisoned and remain there without bail, till they be transported beyond the seas, out of

the king's dominions, wherever the king, his heirs or successors, or chief governors of this kingdom shall think fit; and if any so transported shall return again into this kingdom, then to be guilty of high treason, and suffer accordingly." The sentence awarded to high treason has been stated in page 63.

The Protestant religion recognizes the right of self-interpretation of the scriptures, and will not take part with the civil law which dooms to death the person who believes in the bible as interpreted by Catholic priests.

I have already given as many extracts of laws as I can any way find room for. I cannot even give abridgments of the many penal statutes, which disqualified the Catholics from serving on juries, from loaning money on mortgage, from being guardians of orphan children, from taking or holding leases of land, from exercising the elective or representative franchises, owning or keeping fire arms, from enjoying any office of honour or emolument, civil or military, I cannot give transcripts of those laws which compelled them to find Protestant substitutes in the militia; and rendered them liable to reimburse any property which might be seized on the high seas during any war with a popish prince. I must pass these and many other such laws, without that interesting detail which prescribed limits prevent my giving. I must close this department of my subject with some facts tending to show that the laws were not merely formal or inoperative. If I confine myself to a few cases, I beg the reader not to suppose that my materials are exhausted, they are rather inexhaustible.

As persecution in Ireland was all for the professed good of the church, or, as the hypocrite Cromwell would express it, for the "*glory of God*," so it became necessary to destroy the *heretical* clergy. This was highly beneficial to those who were most active in the good work. The Catholic church had tithes, lands, churches, silver and gold vessels, and

much riches. These became the property of the plunderers, and whatever might have been the pretext, this was the true motive of the persecution.

During this persecution, three thousand Catholics took refuge in the Cathedral of Cashel; the ruffian soldiers forced the doors, and, by order of their commander, butchered the whole, clergy and laity, men, women, and children.

On St. Stephen's day, during the celebration of divine service, in a Catholic chapel, in Cook-street, Dublin, the Mayor and other city officers, accompanied by a file of soldiers, rushed into the chapel, dispersed the congregation, and made prisoners of the clergy, and *prize* of the plate and other valuable articles found therein.

To this I could add a long list of similar enormities, but enough for the present purpose.

The church being robbed, and the church estates sequestered, the greedy cormorants attacked individuals and whole bodies of the people, forcing them into rebellion, and then rendering the rebellion, thus excited, a pretext for plunder, and for every species of cruelty. A great number of the clergy were put to death by the hands of the executioner, and still more came to their death by imprisonment. The laity suffered in full proportion.

Sir Charles Coote, acting under a general order to hang priests and rebels, seized Priest Higgins who had been taken under the special protection of the lord Ormond at Dublin, and had him executed for the *crime* of being a *priest*, and this with such expedition, that Ormond had no opportunity to save him. Against this priest, there was no special charge, he underwent no examination, and had no trial.

Late events brought on the Irish stage, and rendered notorious, the names of O'Brien and Reynolds. The employment of such knaves was not without precedent. Among those of earlier times was Owen O'Conaly. This wretch was a convert to the new

religion, and would be a bad member of any. He was at the service of the "honour of God" party, and could, to use a vulgar phrase, swear through an oak board. This wretch to whose testimony, the "glory of God" party, if we must credit their base historians, owed, that they were not massacred by the Papists, on the morning of the 23d of October, 1641, was an immoral drunken servant of Sir John Clotworthy, and was so intoxicated and in liquor, at the time of giving his private information to lord justice Parsons, of the intended insurrection and massacre, that it became absolutely necessary to send him to bed, whence, after a short snoring repose, he was brought forth, half asleep, half awake, half walking, half falling, neither quite drunk, nor quite sober, to tell his horrid relation of what was to happen, but was not attempted, although it was to be in part executed at such a distance that no precaution or plan to prevent it thoroughly could be devised or executed by the government. It was however resolved by the dominant party, that there should be a rebellion, and consequently arrests, imprisonments, executions, and what was better than all, because more profitable, *confiscations* of the property of the popish rebels. That O'Conaly knew nothing of any intended rebellion was amply evident by every circumstance connected with the supposed case. That he would be excluded from the confidence, and, it might be added, from the society of Irish Catholic gentlemen, by his low rank in society, by his notorious character, and, if they intended murder of the Protestants, by his religion, is equally evident. On his testimony, however, the work of loyalty commenced, by the arrest in the City of Dublin of Hugh McMahon, a gentleman of fortune and a *proprietor of land* in the county of Monaghan. This person was put to the *rack*, in order to extort a confession of guilt. Sir John Read, and the old Mr. Barnwell were also put to the rack. Nothing of importance could be drawn from these gentlemen, and

in fact they could not make the confessions required of them without perjury, which even torture did not induce them to commit.

On this trumped up affair of an intended massacre of Protestants in 1641, upon the information of drunken O'Conaly, the Protestant party in Ireland resolved on confiscations of popish property for the glory of God.* To justify this, there must be crimes, real or imaginary, perjury and provocation were to prepare the way for every species of injustice and cruelty; inquisitors were to discover, and public executioners or semi-licensed barbarians were to exterminate popery, by the murder, in one shape or another, of its conscientious votaries. A public accusation and trial was but a matter of form, the charge was often true, because it consisted in that which the accused deemed a virtue, and would not deny; if otherwise, yet the chance of acquittal was little better. Prejudiced judges, corrupt sheriffs, and packed juries, soon decided the fate of the accused. It even became the practice to transport Irish prisoners to be tried in London, where the witnesses for the accused were generally prevented by their poverty or their fears from attending. The Catholic archbishop Plunket of Armagh, was hurried off to London, put on his trial for a *supposed* conspiracy to aid a *supposed* intended invasion of Ireland by French troops, evidence could easily falsify this ill constructed charge, that evidence was on the road, but the court was in a hurry, and the amiable Plunket was martyred before the proof of his innocence had reached the head quarters of Protestantism.

The fabrication of letters by the government agents, anonymously, or in the real name of some Catholic, was the common means of exciting alarm; the evil doers are easily terrified, many who came to Ire-

*“There were too many Protestants in Ireland who wanted another rebellion, that *they might increase their estates by new forfeitures.*”—CARTE.

land to share in the spoils, would, on such occasions, fly back, and carry the alarm into England. Many of the letters and notices of a more modern date bearing the terrifying signature of "Rock," were probably of a similar origin. Whether this Captain Rock was a booted gentleman pacing a carpetted room in the Dublin castle, or a barefooted descendant of Milesius, bounding over the hills of Tipperary or Cork, whether he enjoys the *otium cum dignitate*, under the vice-regal patronage of an Irish lord lieutenant, or, vivacious as a cat, has yet to die another death, his plans or his capers have certainly given a new impulse to inquiry, and a renovated edge to the natural acuteness of the Irish peasant,* whose every future act, going undoubtedly to his own emancipation, will be governed by rules, and by a system, which require but a certain degree of policy and co-operation, to render armies of soldiers and of spies, of swearers and executioners, of tories and twelfth of July-men, but an incumbrance to those who must support them. As education extends (and it is fast extending in Ireland, for the Irish people are, as they always were, fond of letters) public opinion will be concentrated and become forcible. In a war of bayonets, the oppressor may force his vassals to fight against their brethren, to conquer or extirpate them, but man's mind will be free in spite of despotism. When the war is to be one of opinion, the whole force, or nearly so, will be on the side of the people. In the day, when this will be the case, rulers such as Cromwell, will find themselves without support, sava-

*I do not like the word *peasant*. I use it here, that I may have the opportunity of expressing my dislike of it. It is a term which a republican should never apply to a man. It is descriptive of a degraded state, and that in the absence of any crime. The word seems to be of French derivation, and may have been first used in France, to distinguish between the haughty *noble*, and the degraded *paysan*. There are no peasantry in America, I would fain say there were none in Ireland.

ges such as Barrymore, Inchiquin, and Coote, will be compelled to forego their iniquitous designs. Barrymore was an unprincipled speculator in politics, he is stated by lord Orrery, to have nothing but what he took from the rebels, and, as an instance of the extent of his ravages, to have "hanged forty-three notable rebels for a breakfast." It was the practice of lord Inchiquin to give no quarter in battle, to put to the sword in cold blood, all those who surrendered as prisoners, and even to waylay and hang such as he knew were proceeding to submit to the lord lieutenant; thus adding ill faith to excessive cruelty. The horrid detail of the murders and persecutions of the monster Sir Charles Coote, have not and never will be fully written, his memory is held in the utmost detestation by the Irish people, the oral relations of his cruelties, kept up by tradition, may possibly have suffered somewhat from exaggeration, but no small part of them must be true, and although but a twentieth were so, he must have been the most sanguinary monster ever formed in human shape.

Much of the cruelty exercised against the Irish will appear to many, to be a mere matter of war, in which murder was legalized by precedent. I am ready to admit that dominion and plunder were the real object, it cannot however be denied, that religion was the pretext, that from the commencement of the reign of Elizabeth, down to the year 1825, when the British parliament rejected the bill for the emancipation of Catholics, every measure of Britain against Ireland, had for its real or avowed object, the establishment of Protestantism or the suppression of Popery. The entire history, would prescribed limits allow, might consistently be introduced into an impartial examination of the inquisition. The butchery at Santry by Sir Charles Coote, and that at the Curragh of Kildare, by Sir James Duff, in about two centuries afterwards, may well range alongside of each other, as parts of the same anti-popish system. The plan of the Pro-

testant governors to extirpate the Catholic population of Ireland, formed about the same period when the men, women, and children, were indiscriminately slaughtered at Santry, had subsequently a parallel in the opinion, if not in the proposition, of the late lord chancellor Clare, that the Catholics must be extirpated, if Protestantism is to be preserved.*

“The penal laws were in general (says Dr. Milner) no less severely exercised against the Catholics of Ireland, though they constituted the body of the people, than they were against those of England. Dr. Curry has preserved (amongst a great many other sufferers in the same cause) the names of twenty-seven priests, or religious, who suffered death *on account of their religion*, in the reign of Elizabeth. Spondanus and Pagi relate the horrid cruelties exercised by Sir W. Drury on F. O’Hurle the Catholic archbishop of Cashel, who falling into the hands of this sanguinary governor in the year 1579, was first tortured by his legs being immersed in jack-boots filled with quick lime, water, &c. until they were burned to the bone, in order to force him to take the oath of supremacy, and then, with other circumstances of barbarity, executed at the gallows. It was a usual thing to beat with stones the shorn heads of the clergy, till their brains gushed out. Others had needles thrust under their nails, or the nails themselves torn off. Many were stretched on the rack, or pressed under weights. Others had their bowels torn open, which they were obliged to support with their hands, or their flesh was torn with currycombs.”

Such were the persecutions of christians in the early stage of Protestant power. Those who have witnessed the expiring struggles of the Protestant ascendancy, during the last fifty years, will bear evidence, that with less power to do harm, it possessed all the

* Such a measure is not deemed necessary to the preservation of Protestantism in America.

phrenetic zeal of the earlier furies : free quarters, courts martial, dispensing with juries, or packing them when used, suspending the writ of habeas corpus, and proclaiming districts, were the most substantial evidence that there was a government ; pitch-caps, walking-gallowses, and Orange parades were so many proofs, that there are not wanting legitimate descendants of the early torturers, and assassins. The qualities of the government cannot fail to make an impression of some kind on the governed. When the government holds an even scale, as it does in the United States of America, there will exist among the people, a becoming subordination to law, a general desire for a fair and equal dispensation of justice ; but when, as in Ireland, the government should veer to an extreme, and that to the point of injustice, the people will also incline to extremes, the vicious adhering to the government, the virtuous moving at the greatest distance from it, or approaching it hostilely. In this respect, the great body of the Irish people are influenced by that moral virtue which opposes injustice whencesoever it proceeds. While nature holds sway over the human mind, the sufferer will revolt at ill usage, the oppressed will turn on the oppressor. Ireland is a remarkable instance of this. During nearly seven centuries there has appeared little, if any of protection on the one side, or of real loyalty on the other, injury and retaliation have filled up the long and melancholy history of Ireland's connexion with Britain. Well might a writer say, "there is not perhaps in the history of the world, another instance of a government and a people going on so long together, with so little observance of law on either side."

The Irish as a people have so courageously and with such constancy, adhered to what they deemed right in religion ; they have so steadily opposed the mis-government which laid waste and rendered unprofitable a land so peculiarly favoured with the means of happiness and so abundantly supplied with

the materials of wealth, that, when hereafter, the present time and present people will have passed away, when the prejudice which misdirects, the zeal which dishonours, and the violence which disgraces the dominant party, will die with it, when the acrimony which is too often a reproach to persons of both parties, will subside into better feeling, when crimination will no longer indulge in slander, and recrimination be no longer necessary to the injured, then, when a feverish prepossession will cool into healthy reflection, there will remain but one question in respect to the Irish descendants of the early Milesian emigrants, whether most to admire them as christians, or as men ; as Catholics, or as patriots.

It is a remarkable trait in the history of the reformation, that the reformers in England, in Holland, in France, and elsewhere, modelled their conduct, in many respects, on that which they imputed, and often falsely, to others, and on the presumed commission of which, those laws were enacted against English and Irish Catholics, which, however they might serve the pecuniary interest of the Protestant persecutors, were clearly opposed to the tolerating principles of the Protestant religion. Among the charges against the English Catholics, was that of encouraging, and, as far as possible, taking part with every foreign Catholic prince who made or meditated war on England. Whenever the oppressed Protestants of other countries rebelled against their governments, whenever any foreign war took a religious character, the Protestant government of England was generally ready to fan the flame, privately to comfort, or publicly to aid, the Protestant party. Queen Elizabeth of England became the ally or friend of every German prince who joined the Lutheran standard, she was the ally of Denmark and of Sweden, and the abettor

of the Protestants of the Low countries. In fact the acts and sayings of the reformers would amount to this, that while they condemned what was wrong in others, they claimed for themselves the exclusive right of committing the like, as if Protestant virtue were one thing, and Catholic virtue another; as if these two sects, having two different heads on earth, must also have two distinct heads in heaven. We believe neither sect is ready, as christians, to submit to the imputation. The Catholic princes have indeed taken part in wars and in persecutions against the Protestant reformers, but wrong in one instance, cannot justify wrong in another, besides, the fact is, there was much of insincerity as well as of private design in all these transactions. The civil interest of the nations, the political concerns of the governments, were the real objects that influenced those proceedings which true religion was ever ready to condemn. The French government, by secret or indirect means, alternately countenanced the Huguenots and Catholics, in their furious murders of each other. The observation may in great truth be applied to the British government in its transactions in Ireland. "Divide and conquer," was the rule, but in order to keep up a division which could serve the ends of government, it was also necessary to keep both parties in existence. Could all be made Catholics, or all become Protestants, or could one party be made so all powerful that the other could not, or so amenable that it would not resist, then there would be no use for armies, and the government would even founder in the calm. It must surely be a gross error in religion which can make people injure each other, for the glory of God; and not less an error in politics, which arms man against man, merely at the will of one or of a few designing scoundrels, who artfully sacrifice the public weal only to promote their own private interest. Strange, that rational beings will not cease to be the instruments of cruelty and of sin, that Catho-

lics and Protestants will not shake hands, forgive past injuries, and lay the foundation of future happiness, in an agreement to love and respect each other.

Persecution avowedly for the promotion of religion, has swept from the world fifty millions of human beings. Could the spirits of the deceased visit this world, they would read a lesson which would make kings tremble, and men hide their faces. 'The frightful and in a great degree forgotten excesses committed in every part of Europe, would be brought to light, for a thousandth part of them is not written, and cannot be now told by human being. What we have of them, what we know of them, is condemned by all who read the shocking detail, yet, strange, we can condemn the past and nevertheless make it a precedent for imitation; men, it seems may be christians by profession, and yet murderers by practice.

The British historian Hume confesses, that Philip of Spain, the violent persecutor of Protestants, "founded his determined tyranny on maxims of *civil* policy, as well as on principles of religion." This is a great concession from a Deist: had Hume been a christian, he would carry his candour a greater length, and have acknowledged, that it was altogether civil policy; religion is not bloody, and could not sanction the acts of the sanguinary tyrant. The opposition which Philip met from his subjects in the Low Countries, is a strong proof how impossible it is to bend the minds of men to doctrines not conformable to their conscientious belief. The opposition of the subjects of the kings of England, in Ireland, is an additional illustration of it. In one case the king was Catholic, and the subjects in a great part Protestant; in the other instance, the king is Protestant, and the greater part of the subjects Catholic: in the one case the king, after a dreadful contest, was expelled; in the other, the king *yet* rules. There are signs of coming events, sometimes so strong that the blind only cannot see them. The sanguinary Duke of Alva boasted that he

would extirpate the heretics of the Low Countries, and he seemed bent on performing his promise. He is said to have caused eighteen thousand Protestants to be despatched by the hands of the common executioner, besides the vast numbers otherwise destroyed, yet persecution did not prevail to extermination, the Spaniards were finally driven from the country; public opinion had long rested on the conviction that such must be the issue of the contest: the tyrant only was blind to his impending fate. The tyranny exercised towards the Catholics of Ireland has endured for nearly three centuries, the persecutor, flushed with long victory, seems to believe that his power will be endless. Having proceeded thus far, with impunity, he thinks he may go on with safety; but he is in error, he only is blind, the time is pregnant with a sign that will prove infallible. The Irish Catholics must be unconditionally emancipated, or British rule will soon cease in Ireland. The Duke of York may come to the throne, he may employ the Duke of Wellington, or some other "conquering hero," but the Irish mind, which never bent to a Cromwell or an Ireton, would most assuredly prevail against the menace of the chief, and the power of the subaltern. In such a contest, we should hope that the Irish Catholic would not, like the Protestant of the Low Countries, disgrace himself by the violence of retaliation. "I heartily join (says Dr. Milner) in condemning and execrating the sanguinary vengeance of the Spanish governor and government against their seditious subjects of the Calvinistical persuasion; but to form an adequate judgment in this case, it is proper to attend to the provocations which the former had received from the latter. Not to mention then the conspiracy of Carli and Rissot to assassinate the Duke of Alva himself, at the monastery of Groonfelt, near Brussels, it is certain that one class of the reformers had endeavoured to erect the same fanatical and bloody kingdom in Holland, which John of Leyden actually

established at Munster, crying out, that God had given up the country to them, and that vengeance awaited all who would not join them. It was an ordinary thing with them, to assault the clergy in the discharge of their functions, and the air resounded with their cries of, kill the priests, kill the monks, kill the magistrates. These violences became more common as the reformation extended itself wider. Wherever Vandermerk and Sonoï, both of them lieutenants to the Prince of Orange, carried their arms, they uniformly put to death, in cold blood, all the priests and religious they could lay their hands upon, as at Oudenard, Ruremond, Dort, Middlebourg, Delft, and Shonoven. A celebrated biographer says, that Vandermerk slaughtered more unoffending Catholic priests and peasants, in the year 1572, than Alva executed Protestants during his whole government. He gives us, in the same passage, a copious extract from l'Abbrégé de l'Hist. de l'Holland, par Mons. Kerroux, in which this Protestant author, who professes to write from judicial records still extant, draws a most frightful picture of the infernal barbarities of Sonoï on the Catholic peasants of North Holland. He says that some of these, after undergoing the torments of scourges and the *rack*, were enveloped in sheets of linen that had been steeped in spirits of wine, which being inflamed, they were universally scorched to death; that others, after being tortured with burning sulphur and torches in the tenderest parts of their bodies, were made to die for want of sleep, executioners, being placed on guard over them to beat and torment them, with clubs and other weapons, whenever exhausted nature seemed ready to sink into forgetfulness; that several of them were fed with nothing but salt herrings, without a drop of water or other liquid, until they expired with thirst; finally, that others were stung to death by wasps, or devoured alive by rats, which were confined in coffins with them. Amongst the cruelties, there recounted, some are of so indecent

a nature that they will not bear repeating, and those which occur above, are only mentioned, to induce Dr. Sturges,* and other writers of his class, to join with me in burying the odious names of Alva and Sonoi in equal oblivion."

On this subject, Robertson in his history of the reign of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, says, "The territories which form the republic of the United Netherlands, were lost during the first part of the sixteenth century, among the numerous provinces subject to the house of Austria; and were then so considerable, that hardly one opportunity of mentioning them had occurred in all the busy period of this history. But soon after the peace of Chateau-chambresis,† the violent and bigotted maxims of Philip's government being carried into execution with unrelenting vigour by the Duke of Alva, exasperated the free people of the Low Countries to such a degree, that they threw off the Spanish yoke and asserted their ancient liberties and laws. These they defended with a persevering valor which gave employment to the arms of Spain during half a century, exhausted the vigour, ruined the reputation of that monarchy, and at last constrained their ancient masters to recognise and to treat with them as a free and independent state."

How much should we regret that a people, so bold, so brave and so presevering, should have disgraced themselves and their conquest, by acts, so cruel and savage, that the future historian must be at a loss to determine, whether their religious affections were the result of ill regulated piety, or of overheated fanaticism; whether their patriotism was real or spurious.

The spreading of the reformation in Germany and its introduction into France, gave rise to that dreadful

* A Protestant minister between whom and Dr. Milner, there existed a controversial disputation.

† Concluded between Philip the Second of Spain, and Henry the Second of France; and between the latter and Elizabeth of England in 1559.

contest between the French government and Huguenots which spread desolation and death with a sinful cruelty on both sides, disgraceful to humanity and dishonourable to religion. In fact, however the French government may have, in the early stage of the reformation, feared its consequences on society, it yet was instrumental to its introduction into France by insidiously making it the means of creating political dissensions in Germany. Dr. Milner in his notice of the horrid massacre of Protestants on St Bartholemew's day, at Paris, says, "I will not attempt to justify it, as the king, the queen dowager, and the ministers of France did, at the time when it happened, by pretending that the Huguenots were on the point of executing a plot to destroy them, and to overturn the government, because it is now clear from history, that no such plot existed at that particular time. I will not even extenuate its atrociousness by expatiating on the two real conspiracies for seizing on this very king and his court, and for subverting the constitution of their country, which the Calvinists had actually attempted to execute ; or the four pitched battles which they had fought against the armies of their sovereign ; or on their treachery in delivering up Havre de Grace, the key of the kingdom, into the hands of a foreign potentate, queen *Elizabeth* ; or even upon the massacres with which they themselves had previously inundated all France. So far from this, I am ready to exclaim with Thuanus, in contemplating the horrors of St. Bartholemew's day, *excidat illa dies ævo nec postera credant sæcula*. But let the blame fall where it is due, on the black vengeance of the unrelenting Charles the Ninth, and on the remorseless ambition of the unprincipled Catherine of Medecis, who *alternately* favoured the Catholics and Huguenots, as seemed best to suit her own interests.*

* Is not this, in effect, an epitomised history of the equivocal, double-dealing, conduct of the British government towards the Catholics and Protestants of Ireland ?

The very calumny that I mentioned before, which the king and queen invented to excuse their barbarity, is a sufficient proof that they did not conceive it lawful to commit such crimes to serve their religion, for which indeed neither of them felt much zeal; neither was this villany contrived with the participation of a single individual of the French clergy :* on the contrary, this body was the most forward, at the time, to oppose its completion, and has, ever since, been the most warm in reprobating it. It is in particular recorded of Henuyer, a Dominican friar and bishop of Lisieux, that he opposed to the utmost of his power, the execution of the king's order† for the murder of the Protestants in his diocese, answering the governor of the province when he communicated it to him : ‘ It is the duty of the good shepherd to lay down his life for his sheep, not to let them be slaughtered before his face. These are my sheep, though they have gone astray, and I am resolved to run all hazards in protecting them.’

Montesquieu says that when there is but one religion in a state (as in Spain,) it lies at the magistrates' discretion to reject a new doctrine; but, when many religions (as in England) have got a footing, they are to be tolerated.‡ Admitting this principle, it could not

* Had it been otherwise, had some or even all the French clergy concurred in the murders, it would yet be no proof that the Catholic religion had or could have approved or defended such atrocity.

† Must not this order by the king be issued in his civil capacity. He was not head of the church, and but a bad son of it. How then can his act be attributed to the Catholic or to any religion, seeing that he bore or assumed no ecclesiastical authority, not even by deputation.

‡ Toleration should be understood in a liberal sense. To permit a man to say his prayers as he pleases, is not toleration, if he is to be disfranchised for so saying them. The spirit of perfect toleration is fast travelling through the world. England seems destined to set no example of real toleration to any country, she seems resolved to hold as long as possible by the princi-

justify the French king in his persecution of Protestants ; he was in no small degree the indirect introducer of the Lutheran religion into his kingdom ; and however he might rely on the maxim of Montesquieu in justification of keeping it *out* in the first instance, it was too late to attempt its suppression after letting or rather inviting, it *in*. The massacre of St. Bartholemew's day, was a murder of a foul and monstrous magnitude.

The state of affairs in France, after the death of Francis the Second, and in the commencement of the administration of the queen regent, in the year 1562, is thus described by Hume.

“ The queen regent of France, when reinstated in authority by the death of her son Francis, had formed a plan of administration more subtle than judicious ; and balancing the Catholics with the Huguenots,* the duke of Guise with the prince of Conde, she endeavoured to render herself necessary to both, and to establish her own dominion on their constrained obedience. But the equal counterpoise, which, among foreign nations, is the source of tranquility, proves always the ground of quarrel between domestic factions, and if the animosity of religion concur with the frequent occasions which present themselves of mutual injury, it is impossible during any time, to preserve a firm concord in so delicate a situation. The constable Montmorency, moved by zeal for the ancient faith, joined himself to the duke of Guise : the king of Navarre, from his inconstant temper, and his jealousy of the superior genius of his brother, embraced the same party : and Catherine finding herself depressed by this combination, had recourse to Conde and the Hu-

ples of religious intolerance, and to be the last to give way to a current whose accumulated force will soon prove itself irresistible.

* Ribbonmen and Orangemen, of Ireland ! what think you of this ? Are you not also balanced against each other, by the political jugglers who laugh at, and scorn you both ?

guenots, who gladly embraced the opportunity of fortifying themselves by her *countenance* and *protection*. An edict had been published granting a toleration to the Protestants, but the interested violence of the duke of Guise, covered with the *pretence of religious zeal*, broke through the agreement: and the two parties, after the fallacious tranquillity of a moment, renewed their mutual insults and injuries. Conde, Coligni, Andelot, assembled their friends, and flew to arms. Guise and Montmorency got possession of the king's person, and constrained the queen regent to embrace their party. Fourteen armies were levied and put in motion in different parts of France. Each province, each city, each family, was agitated with intestine rage and animosity. The father was divided against the son, brother against brother, and women themselves sacrificing their humanity as well as their timidity to the religious fury, distinguished themselves by acts of ferocity and valour. Wherever the Huguenots prevailed, the images were broken, the altars pillaged, the churches demolished, and the monasteries consumed by fire: where success attended the Catholics, they burned the bibles, re-baptized the infants,* constrained married persons to pass anew through the nuptial ceremony. And plunder, desolation, and bloodshed, attended the course of both."

Dr. Milner, in his view of the conduct of the Catholics and Reformers, has the following paragraph.

"We have moreover seen that when the occasion called for such exertions, (the exertions of the Catholics,) those who had it in their power to make them, supported the established (British Protestant) government, in opposition to their interest and that of their religion, with their purses and their swords. If you

* I know not how far the exasperated fury of parties may have led them, but I think a second baptism of infants is contrary to the tenets of the Protestant church; it is certainly so in respect to the Catholic church. This re-baptizing of infants must have been a creature of Mr. Hume's conception.

turn your eyes from England to the surrounding nations of Europe, during the period of this very reign, (the reign of Elizabeth) ask in which of them did the professors of the new religion prove the same loyalty to their Catholic sovereigns or magistrates who persecuted or opposed them? Did they not universally, in such cases, fly to arms, and overturn the government, when it was in their power to do so? You should have glanced at the conduct of the Anabaptists and the Lutherans in Germany and Sweden, the Huguenots in France, the Gueux in the Netherlands, the Zuinglians in Switzerland, the Presbyterians in Scotland, and the Calvinists at Geneva, before you charged the Catholics of England with disloyalty to queen Elizabeth."

It is an unpleasant task to review the relative pretensions of conflicting parties, and still more so when religion enters into the dispute. The writer, in such case, is almost certain to bring on himself the censure of one or of both. Perhaps I ought to escape with whole bones, for truly I take part with neither, I merely stand forward the advocate of revealed religion, by whatever name it be designated, I maintain that it is not a code of blood, confiscation, or death. That the Catholic and the Protestant alike sin, when they persecute, and that the best evidence either can give of purity of religion, is to imitate the charity, the mildness, and the forbearance, of which the Redeemer of all, left so bright an example. I deny the right in a British king to say to the Irish Catholic, you must be Protestant, because he might as well and with the same propriety order him to adore the sun, if the king should think proper to adore that luminary. I deny the right of the Pope as a temporal prince, and he will not dare attempt it as head of the church, to force religion on me, or to propagate it by any other mode than the mild persuasives of the Gospel. I challenge the advocate for establishing religion by compulsion, to show how the man who disbelieves in it, can become a convert to it, without committing crime un-

less he has absolutely relinquished his disbelief, how he can swear that it is orthodox and yet disbelieve it, without committing perjury ; finally, I claim for every man the most perfect and entire liberty of conscience. I presume not to enter into a religious controversy, and leave to the learned theologian who spent his seven years in collegiate study, and the illiterate enthusiast who spent as many years in earning his bread by the sweat of his brow, to determine what is the true explanation of the scripture, I pretend not, herein, to say, whether the Deist who denies the entire of the Bible, the Catholic who believes it all, or the Protestant who believes only a part, is right. I am certain that the persecutor for conscience sake, is wrong ; and that a bloody inquisition, wherever and by whomsoever instituted, is not, and cannot be a tenet, of the divine religion. I am not however indifferent in the choice I make for myself. With O'Leary, I say, " we have every respect for the christian religion and its ministers of all denominations, and, without any doubt, for that system in which we have had the happiness to be reared up, but we are extremely sorry that religion has ever been made a pretext for persecution or oppression."

Having, as I hope, rendered it sufficiently plain, that the Protestants are involved, through the conduct of their civil governments, in the charge which they erroneously make against the Catholics ; having sufficiently proven, that if the establishment of a sanguinary Inquisition be a fundamental tenet of the Catholic, it is, by a parity of reasoning, a fundamental tenet also of the Protestant religion, having placed the Catholic and Protestant religions alongside each other, so that it will be impossible to convict the one and acquit the other, I proceed with great satisfaction to show that neither are accountable for the excesses

committed in their name. If the act of the magistrate may be charged to the religion of which he was a sincere or hypocritical professor, what sect will stand innocent? If the guilty deserve death, who will throw the first stone? "Since the days of the emperor Theodosius, laws have been enacted against heresy. Lawyers and divines of both communions have been divided in their opinions: Geneva and London, Calvinist magistrates and Protestant kings, have concurred with the Spanish inquisitors in blazing the faggot, and forestalling the rigour of eternal justice. The writ *de heretico comburendo* (of burning heretics) was in force down to the reign of Charles the Second, and has met a learned apologist in Calvin. By the statute and common laws of England, some punishments are still* in force against heretics; but how far these and severer punishments inflicted by the civil and imperial laws, are impious and unchristian, kings, not subjects, are interested to determine."†

In the examination of this question, it seems necessary to rest for a moment on the point, whether the Pope be infallible; it is a material question, because if he be infallible, he might use his infallibility to give the authority of infallible sanction to every human institution however opposed to reason and to justice. The assumed authority and consequent interference of Popes in the regulation of the civil concerns of nations, has been the source of loud complaint by all classes of persons, and has been resisted by Catholics as well as by Protestants. I do not know however that any Pope has pretended to infallibility; nor would it materially affect my subject if he had; for, whatever popes might assume, whatever individuals might suppose or believe, I am amply upheld in the position, that the infallibility of the Pope is *not an article of the Catholic faith*. The assertion that it is so, is altogether Protestant as far as I know, and

* 1781.

† O'Leary.

whether Catholic or Protestant, I am not bound to go farther than a denial of it, I deny it most emphatically; the assertor of it is bound to make out his own case, or to relinquish it as untenable. Among the Protestant writers who roundly asserted that the infallibility of the Pope was an article of Catholic faith, Dr. Sturges, prebendary of Winchester, signalized himself by his zeal, yet when Dr. Milner replied, that persecution was not a tenet of the Roman Catholic religion, the prebendary comes out in apparent astonishment, saying, "this is somewhat surprising, if it be true, all of us Protestants must have been long under an egregious error." Dr. Sturges', caveat "if it be true," leaves room for any other minister of the established church to repeat the same charge, whenever a like motive and object may influence him.*

I have said (page 19), that, admitting the establishment of a bloody inquisition to be an essential emanation of the Catholic church, and that every Catholic is bound to receive it as an article of Catholic faith, then the outcry against it comes with a bad grace from those who themselves have instituted an inquisition as scrutinizing, a persecution as unrelenting, and punishments as cruel, as the most exagger-

* Dr. Sturges secured to himself the patronage of the late bigotted king of England, by writing a book against popery, a subject of which the Doctor was so ignorant, that he charged the institution of the Inquisition to St. Domnick, who died before the pontificate of Innocent the Third, in whose reign it was founded. So vicious is the taste of a great proportion of British readers, that no author, however meritorious his work, can depend on a favourable reception, unless he disgraces his production by some libel or ridicule on the Catholic religion; while a publication however contemptible in itself, will meet certain patronage, if it but contains a dash at the "whore of Babylon." O tempora, O mores!

It is also erroneously stated in Buchanan's Christian researches in Asia, that St. Domnick was the founder of the Inquisition. This writer gives a very improbable account of his visit to Goa and to the prison of the inquisition at that place.

ted accounts of those of Spain and Portugal. The British Protestant, to whom I alluded, will find himself in quite an awkward situation, if, without an atom of evidence to support him, he will persevere to maintain that, the infallibility of the Pope is an article or tenet of the Roman Catholic faith.

The tenets of the Protestant church do not bind its members to receive as obligatory on them, or as orthodox, whatever the head of the British church may direct or assert; for, were this the case, the Protestant religion in America must, in its fundamental tenets, differ from that of the Protestant church in America; yet, there would be more reason in ascribing infallibility to the head of the Protestant, than to the head of the Catholic church; for the king, who is head of the church in England, does assume an infallibility, and such infallibility is publicly recognized: the law of the land says, "the king can do no wrong." Perhaps this principle was intended to apply to the king only in his civil capacity, although a devotion to the monarch, a dread of approaching within a hair's breadth of treason, or a desire to uphold the utmost prerogative of the crown, may have stood in the way of a perfect eclaireissement. I think, however, that the English bishops are not inclined to submit their religion entirely to the king, for were they to do so, I know not what security they would have against the re-enaction of the six articles of Henry the Eighth, or the restoration of the church temporalities to the Catholic clergy. I am aware of the subtle arguments which lawyers draw from their view of the common law, and what they call the general system, in support of the infallibility of the king; but I cannot, in this free country, swallow the dose. I do not hate a murderer the less because he wears a monarch's crown, I cannot see by what right a king may slay his subjects, and escape responsibility, because "the king cannot do wrong." The heir apparent to the British crown may be brought to account for a crime, but

although that crime were murder, although the judges were in session, although the jury were empannelled, although the evidence had been gone through, and that clear, unimpeached, and uncontradicted, yet, were the king to die, the judge would be compelled by his duty, the moment he had official knowledge of the king's death, to suspend the proceedings, discharge the jury, and send the murderer, to rule over the nation, as he would over the church. This is, I think, improving on infallibility by giving it a retrospective operation. An investigation of the morality of this law belongs not to my subject, it is extremely necessary that myself and my readers have a good understanding on the several topics as we go along: this thing called infallibility is a stumbling block which must be removed else we cannot well proceed.

Whatever the Catholics may have suffered under the government of a Protestant king who "cannot do wrong," I do not know that they ever attributed to the Protestant church that it contains any such fundamental tenet as that its head is infallible. In the absence of such charge, I see no necessity to enter minutely on its denial.

The error in respect to the papal infallibility (if it is not downright and wilful misrepresentation on the part of those who gave rise to it) must have arisen from the confounding of the Pope with the church, the head with the body. The infallibility of the church is, I think, the tenet of every christian sect; but the Pope is not the church, he is but its visible head and chief ruler upon earth, chosen, we may suppose, for his established piety, and sound judgment; yet, he is but a man, and may even be a bad man.

I presume that Catholics and Protestants are, by this time, prepared to give up as an article of faith any presumed infallibility in the heads of their respective churches, if either of them, in their religious capacities, ever entertained such belief, of which I can find no proof whatever on the part of the Catho-

lic, and nothing strictly religious on the part of the Protestant. I, respectfully propose to both Catholic and Protestant, that we lay aside this affair of infallibility, we will undoubtedly get along better without it.

The people of England loudly boast of their being a free people, they may be comparatively so, they may have more freedom than the Russian, the Pole, or the Turk, but they have less than the Americans. I am not on a political subject and will not quarrel with the Englishman on this point. If he has enough of liberty to please his palate, a stranger to him has no right to force more on him; but if the errors of the English people or the evils of their government, be injurious by its example or otherwise to other nations, then it is fair, to a certain extent, to canvass the subject, were it only for the purpose of defence.

To the power which the law gives to the British king, by declaring that he cannot do wrong, and the unlimited power of a parliament which is omnipotent,* England owes, that religion has been disgraced by persecution. Had the parliament *really* represented the people, education would have been grounded on wholesome liberality, and the people would not have become the *slaves* of prejudice. This omnipotent parliament erected an Inquisition in England, this omnipotent parliament has abridged the power of this inquisition, and may, possibly, at some time, obliterate every remnant of it; but it should not be forgotten, that the parliament may, in its omnipotence, even revive it. Omnipotence in a parliament seems to me as preposterous and untenable as infallibility in a king. If this be liberty to the Briton, be it so, but I protest against the introduction into the United States of America of any Inquisition, High court of commission, or parliamentary omnipotence, incompatible

* Blackstone says of the British parliament "It can change the religion of the land, and do every thing under Heaven that is possible."

with civil and religious liberty ; I labour to expel every remnant of it yet lurking therein. To be avowedly free, and yet a slave to ill-grounded prejudice, would be an anamoly in politics, ill suited to an enlightened people.

I do not see that a laborious course of argument can be necessary in order to discharge the Protestant religion from any participation in the erection of bloody tribunals in England, by a Protestant civil government, although Cobbet and others say that it grew out of the reformation, that is, had there been no reformation, England would not have been visited by the Protestant, Puritanical, and Catholic excesses, which converted England, and still more Ireland, into slaughter-houses, where hecatombs of human victims, were barbarously sacrificed for the "Glory of God," where persecution and proscription were held up as the insignia of reform and religion, where the altar smoked with human victims, where action and reaction, in impious ebb and flow, became the destruction of the land, and the ruin of its people, by sowing the seed of demoralization, whence grew up that irreligious hatred of the neighbour, which can so ill accord with the love of God, which bloody hypocrites or maniac-zealots believed, or would make others believe, could best be promoted by substituting force for persuasion, and violence for meekness.

It is not equally unnecessary to pass over the charge as it is made against the Catholic religion, for the uncharitable opponents of that creed, have in so many shapes and forms, on so many occasions, and on the authority of such various writers, endeavoured to connect it with persecution, that a particular defence of it seems not only necessary to the Catholic, but to the professors of other creeds, for if so monstrous a libel be left without refutation, where rests the certainty

that the open enemy of the Catholic religion may not be the covert foe of religion generally, or that under the pretext of rooting out what he calls error, and introducing what he deems reform, he may not be running the mine from which he intends to blow up revelation.

The British reader can find no difficulty in understanding how one individual can exercise two high functions not necessarily connected with each other. The king of England is the chief executive officer of the civil government of his country, he is also the visible head of the established British or Protestant church. In like manner, is the Pope the visible head of the Catholic Church, and also the chief executive magistrate and reigning prince, over a territory constituting a part of Italy, of which Rome is the capital city, and the chief residence of the Pope. As the king of England, as a civil magistrate, may and occasionally does introduce into the policy whereby he manages the civil concerns of his nation, matters, regulations, and ordinances, which he ought not, and perhaps could not, introduce into the ecclesiastical policy; and as he may, as head of his church, impose regulations and laws for the government of its members, which it might be inconvenient or impossible to impose on his subjects, in virtue of his civil authority, so is it with the pope. He governs his principality in its civil concerns by such laws as the occasion may, in his estimation, demand. In the government of the church, he cannot act as caprice directs, he must herein act as the principles of religion, already laid down and established, require. This view of this part of our subject is highly necessary to be understood and recollected, that in considering the conduct of the heads of the respective churches, it may put us in mind of the material distinction, whether the prince acted in his civil, or in his spiritual capacity.

The first error respecting the Inquisition, is the supposition that it was instituted for the simple protection of religion. I know not how far that might have been the pretext, but I am satisfied it was not the real motive. If the Roman Catholic was the religion of Christ, and so the Pope, the Clergy, and all the christian world, at one time held it to be, no human agency could overthrow it, it had a *promise* which could not fail to be fulfilled, it had a security for its permanence which no artifice could abridge, it had an all-powerful arm to defend it, and could not require a bloody Inquisition for its support. This tribunal must have been erected by a *state policy only*, and that for *civil* purposes. We must, as I already proposed, exclude all belief in the infallibility of any man, as an article of faith, otherwise we will proceed blindfolded, and may loose our way. We must see in the Pope, a temporal prince at the head of an earthly kingdom, and also an ecclesiastic at the head of the Catholic Church; and in both situations, a man endowed very probably with more than common talents, and favoured very possibly, with more than a common share of grace, but yet a man who must feel in some degree the applicability to him of the expression "*nil humanum a me alienum puto*," he had, doubtless, a share of those passions incidental to humanity; he had his fears, his cares, his anxieties, he may, for all I know, have been ambitious, vindictive, tyrannical; I have not studied his character, and pretend not to any knowledge of it. If the opposers of his religion can derive any advantage from attributing to him a full portion of the worst qualities of men filling high stations, I shall leave it to others to defend him; to my purpose it is not very material, for although he should be in fact what his enemies may represent him, yet my case can loose nothing by it. What his private character was may be matter of curiosity or of individual concern; his situation as a personage in high public

station, is matter of public concern, and may be collected from the history of the times.

The period in which Innocent the Third (the reputed founder of the Inquisition) reigned, was anterior to the reformation of Luther, christendom was nearly all Catholic, the Pope exercised, or attempted to exercise, great authority, the princes of Europe, although his spiritual children, and in this point, his inferiors, were very jealous of the authority he presumed to exercise, they were restiff, and often either menacing or rebellious. To these were added a host of minor enemies, the scismatics and reformers of that day, men who, by their superior address, had obtained an influence not always to be despised for its insignificance, and sometimes dangerous on account of its increasing authority. Sound policy would have dictated to the Pope to defend his person and his territories, by placing an efficient barrier between himself and his enemies. This would have been the duty and the conduct of any other prince, and why not of Innocent the Third? whether the Inquisition was the proper, the only, or the best defence he could have recourse to, whether it was, in his situation, justifiable, whether any danger or exigency could authorize it, or whether he, because head of the Catholic Church, was therefore precluded from the institution of a tribunal, the like of which might in an after age be instituted by the head of another church, are questions I am not competent to decide, and which cannot, in any case, affect the issue of the present inquiry. If it be made to appear a *state measure*, not dictated nor required by religion, the object with which I took up my pen will be attained. To effect this, it is only necessary to prove, that being opposed to religion, it could not be called for, or sanctioned by it. It was not, at any rate, a mere measure of caprice. Danger menaced: defence was the law of policy and of nature.

France and England, those rival nations whose people drew their swords against each other before the

era of christianity, and sheathed them but when the decisive superiority of a victorious party dictated peace, or mutual exhaustion put an end to hostilities, and who, regardless of treaties or good faith, threw away the scabbard whenever reinvigorated strength permitted, were now at war. Philip ruled over France; John reigned in England: they were both Catholics.

John was a bad son of the church; he had many faults, and few if any virtues: without morality or religion, he was faithless, cruel, and tyrannical, his conduct was a compound of equivocal courage, and undisguised meanness; his obstinacy yielded but to his fears; his inordinate pride but to his total want of resolution in the presence of danger. He drew on himself the displeasure of the Pope, who threatened to put him under an interdict; and he, in return, threatened to put out the eyes, slit the noses, and crop the ears of any emissaries the Pope would send into England, with unfriendly views. John had powerful means of annoying an enemy, but he knew not how to use them: but for the rebellious disposition of his subjects whom he neither knew how to suppress or conciliate, and the determined opposition of his barons, he would probably not have left to Martin Luther the work of reforming religion. His submission to the Pope, was mean, entire, and insincere. It however gained him the pardon and friendship of his holiness. John continued obedient, although there was little doubt of his private jealousy of the papal authority, or that he would fondly embrace an opportunity to retaliate the harsh treatment he suffered from the head of the church.

The French king, no less rebellious than John had been, in utter defiance of the Pope's injunction and threat, and denying the right of Innocent to interfere in temporal concerns, invaded the possessions of king John. The French barons cordially joined their king in opposition to the Pope's mandate. Philip, thus sup-

ported, laid siege to Chateau Gaillard, on the confines of Normandy, which he took after a long and arduous siege, equally remarkable for the almost unparalleled bravery of the besiegers, and of the defenders.

This rebellious spirit evinced by France and England, gave his holiness serious uneasiness, for although England had submitted to his authority, and a reconciliation had taken place with France, the Pope could not repose confidence in the sincerity of either.

To the disguised enmity or doubtful friendship of France and England, Pope Innocent had to add the irreconcilable enmity of other opponents, persons of engaging address, persuasive talents, and desperate resolution. However violent the defence which Innocent prepared for himself, however men may condemn it, it will find a full parallel in the character, conduct, and designs of the desperadoes who were opposed to him. Why the British people should, in after ages, take the conduct of this Pope, as a precedent for their own legislation, or why, having adopted it, they should resolve not only to exceed it in its worst features, but even to equal it in those in which misrepresentation had depicted it, is altogether unaccountable or why so blind to their own misdeeds, they should open a battery on those of another, which could not fail to call home to themselves the universal odium. Their missiles may be said to have recoiled from the walls of the Vatican even until they struck against the chapel of St. Stephen's.

I cannot do this subject more justice than by giving an extract from the works of the learned Dr. O'Leary, a divine who professed the most liberal and charitable opinions, was of the highest talents and finest education, a man whose name and character were familiar to the people of every part of Europe, respected and revered by all who had the happiness of his personal acquaintance, and admired by all who knew him but by fame. His life and writings is an admirable commentary on the narrow and unsocial bigotry and on the

vile laws which, to use his own language, speaking of himself and the inquisitorial edicts of his native country, "doom me to transportation with the common malefactor." So liberal and unprejudiced was he, with such open boldness did he define the rights the power, and pretensions of the Pope, that the weak Protestant and the weak Catholic alike trembled, the one in the hope of his conversion, the other in fear for his orthodoxy. But O'Leary was too great a man to be wrong, and too good, knowingly to quit the right path. The Pope, who would not pardon an improper attack on the head of the church, signified his high confidence in the integrity and virtue of the reverend Arthur O'Leary, by the most appropriate and undoubted act of his approval, and which speaks volumes in support of my subject,—Mr. O'Leary was, by a papal bull, elevated to the dignity of a bishop.

"The Pope (says this Rev. divine) was in possession of a city which formerly gave birth to so many heroes, besides a good territory bestowed on him by several sovereigns. He thought it high time to look about him, when all Europe was in one general blaze. The liberty of the gospel preached by Muncer and several other enthusiasts, threw all Germany into a flame, and armed boors against their sovereigns. As he was a *temporal prince*, he dreaded for his sovereignty, as well as other crowned heads in his neighbourhood; and the more so, as his soldiers were better skilled in saying their beads, than handling the musket.

"Great events, the downfall of empires, and the rise or destruction of extraordinary characters, are commonly foretold in oracles, both sacred and profane; and he found himself in the same dubious and critical situation with Montezuma, when the Spaniards landed in America.

"Old prophecies foretell our fall at hand,

"When bearded men in floating castles land."

“Long before the reformation, the dimensions of his city were taken; the line was extended over its walls; and it was discovered that it was ‘the great city built on seven hills, the harlot which had made the kings of the earth drunk with her cup; and that her sovereign was antichrist, the man of sin,’ mentioned by St. Paul, in his epistle to the Thessalonians. Wickliff, Huss, and Jerome of Prague, had laid down a rule, many years before, that, ‘Popes, princes, and bishops, in the state of mortal sin, have no power:’ and a state of grace was, doubtless, incompatible with the character of Antichrist. Jerome of Prague, who was burned afterwards at Constance, to show that Rome was the harlot of the Revelations, after beating a monk, and drowning another, dressed one day, a prostitute in a Pope’s attire, with the three crowned cap, made of paper, on her head, and in her head-dress, without being so careful of the rest of her body, led the female pontiff, half naked, in a procession through the streets of Prague, in derision of a religion professed by the magistrates.

“Some *well-bred* divines there are, who justify such proceedings, on the principle that it was requisite, at that time, ‘to cry aloud, and use a strong wedge to break the knotty block of popery.’ I do not believe there is a well-bred Protestant living, who would applaud either *martyr* or *divine* who would exhibit such a merry spectacle in the streets of Dublin or London; or who would shed a tear for his loss, if, after exhibiting such a show, in Rome or Paris, he fell into the hands of the inquisition, or were sent to the galleys. The gospel truth is no enemy to decency.

“St. Paul, in pleading his cause before Festus, did not inveigh against his vestal virgins, the adulteries of their gods, or the wickedness of his emperors. Let a religion of state be ever so false, the magistrate who professes it, will feel himself insulted, when it is attacked in a gross, injurious manner: and, if apologies can be made for indecencies and seditious doctrines,

under pretence of overthrowing idolatry, some allowance must be made for men who think themselves insulted by such attacks.

“The Pope, then, as a *sovereign prince*, had every thing to dread, when the thrones of the German princes began to totter from the shocks of inspiration : but what still increased his alarms, was, the unfolding of the Revelations, which held him up to all Europe, as the Antichrist, the general enemy of christians, who should be destroyed. Lest any one should miss his aim, it was proved from the Revelations, that he was the beast with ten horns ; and, in bearing down such a game, the world was to be renewed, and the peaceful reign of the millennium, during which Christ was to reign with the saints on earth, was to begin. The time was approaching. Old John Fox, the martyrologist, says, that after long study and prayers, God had cast suddenly into his mind, by divine inspiration, that the forty-two months must be referred to the church’s persecutions, from the time of John the Baptist. This calculation was to bring on the Pope’s destruction about the year sixteen hundred. Brightman was more precise, and foretold the final downfall of the Pope, in the year fifteen hundred and forty-six : others in fifteen hundred and fifty-six : and others in fifteen hundred and fifty-nine. Luther came closer to the famous era ; and published his prophecy, in which it was revealed to him, that the Pope and the Turk would be destroyed in two years after the date of his oracle. This, certainly, was a close attack on the Pope, who, in all appearance, did not like to die so soon, even of a natural death. He apprehended the accomplishments of the oracles the more, as at that time, almost every one was *inspired*, and ready to do any thing for the destruction of Antichrist.

“Alexander Ross, in his view of religion, describes numbers of those prophets, and amongst the rest one Hermannus Sutor, a cobbler of Optzant, who professed himself a true prophet, and the Messiah Son of

God; a very dangerous neighbour for Antichrist! This man, to receive the prophetic inspiration, stretched himself naked in bed; and, after ordering a hogshead of strong beer to be brought close to him, began to drink in the source of inspiration, and to receive *the spirit by infusion*; when, on a sudden, 'he,' to use the words of Alexander Ross, 'with a Stentor's voice and a horrid howling, among other things, often repeated this: 'Kill cut throats, without any quarter, kill all those monks, all those Popes. Repent, repent; for your deliverance is at hand.' However extraordinary such a character would appear now, yet at that time, inspiration was so frequent, that one would imagine all Germany was a nation of prophets; and Hermannus, who was afterwards put to death by Charles, Lord of Guelderland, had credit enough to make proselytes.

"The Pope, thus aimed at, as an object of destruction, from all quarters—and seeing, almost in every nation in Europe, a nursery of prophets foretelling his ruin, and animating the candidates for sanctity to undertake the pious task, began to tremble, not only for his territories, but, moreover, for his personal safety. He knew that the imaginations of his Italian subjects were naturally warm; and that, if but one of them caught the prophetic flame, the stiletto would soon be darted into Antichrist. He found imperial laws already enacted, and as he was a *temporal prince* whose person was more exposed than any highwayman in Europe, he copied those laws into his directory; and erected the Inquisition as a barrier between himself and the formidable foes, who not only foretold his downfall, but encouraged their followers to fulfil the prediction.

"The impartial reader, in tracing this formidable tribunal, will discover a *political establishment*, and a *temporal safeguard*. None can infer from its institution, that it is lawful by the principles of religion, to deprive a man of his life, precisely on account of his

worship: and every one must acknowledge, that, if ever a prince, whose life and territories were in danger, was authorized to take the severest precautions to secure both, no mortal could plead for greater indulgence in having recourse to rigorous measures, than one who united in his person the dignity of a prince, which at that time was both an object of envy and detestation to people who considered sovereignty as subversive of christian religion—and the character of a sovereign pontiff, which made him pass for an outlaw, and the great enemy of Christ, in whose destruction the world was so deeply concerned. Let any person put himself in his case, and judge for himself.”

The reader is now, I presume, pretty fully in possession of the motive with which Innocent the Third resorted to the Inquisition, as well as the nature of the provocation which impelled him to that severe measure. Whether he deems it justifiable or not, he must see, that it was a transaction solely of the civil government, in which the ecclesiastical could not, at least so far as it was bloody, take any concern; and in the excesses of which, the Pope, as head of the church, could not take any concern, and in which, whatever may have been his pretentions, whatever may have been his personal conduct, he could not act so as to authorize the infliction of death or the privation of a limb, without violating the mild doctrine and established tenets of his religion. Some observations in support of this assertion will be offered to the reader before closing this subject. In fact, the Pope, as an ecclesiastic, had no concern in the institution of the Inquisition at Rome. It originated with the civil government, of which it is true the Pope is the chief or first executive officer, but in the administration of which government, the Pope, as head of the church especially when contrary to either the discipline or tenets of the church, takes no concern. The king of England, by aid of his parliament or counsellors, orders the

banishment or execution of a Catholic bishop only because the bishop believes in transubstantiation, but the king, as head of the church, promulgates no such doctrine; herein, he acts in his civil capacity only, and certainly in opposition to the Protestant creed which professes the utmost toleration in religion. It is said of the king of England, and for what I know of every other king, that he never dies, because the law provides for his successor. The same may be not very improperly said of the head of the Catholic church; for although there be a temporary vacancy of the papal chair during the time between the demise of one Pope and the election of another, yet the church is never for a moment without a government. The High Court of Commission was not erected in England to protect the king as head of the church, for the church is always supposed to be in keeping so safe, so powerful, that no earthly machinations can destroy it, the High Court of Commission was erected by the civil authority for the protection of the king's person as first civil magistrate of the nation. The Inquisition in Rome was not instituted for the protection of the Pope as head of the church, but by the civil government for his protection as first magistrate of the civil territory over which he reigns. The church would not be overthrown by the murder more than it would be by the natural death of Innocent the Third, it is not even certain that it would be injured thereby; nor is it quite certain that it might not be benefitted.

Those persons who have so industriously laboured, and often to promote their own private fortune, to fasten on the Catholic religion all that was censurable in the institution and in the acts of the Inquisition, have not confined themselves to imputing to the Catholic religion whatever excesses were committed by

that tribunal in Rome, where the government of the church and of the state were vested in the same person, and where it might easily be supposed that the transactions of the one might be influenced by those of the other, but they also charged to the same religion the acts of inquisitions in every other Catholic country, where that tribunal had been erected, although the chiefs of such nations had no pretensions to be heads of the church, and were at most acknowledged to be its sons, and bad sons they often were, not only acting contrary to its dictates, but even making war on their spiritual father.

The Inquisition was introduced into Spain from motives similar to those which influenced Innocent the Third, the protection of the king and government against the evil designs of an enemy. The motive will by many be considered still more pressing on the Spanish government than on the Roman. The Pope's enemies were without his territories and beyond the control of his civil authority; his efforts were directed to the purpose of excluding from his country, opinions which were deemed destructive of society and good morals, as well as of pure religion; he wished to preserve his subjects from being infected by them. The enemies of the king of Spain were within his territory, and as deadly opposed to him as any enemy of the Pope could be to this prince.

The Moors inhabited a part of Spain; they were Mahometans; their law, unlike that of the christians, was bloody, and the christians were the particular objects of their vengeance and fury. So far from voluntarily subjecting themselves to the christian government, they even meditated to place themselves over it; so far from being converts to the christian faith, they hoped to convert the christians to infidelity. Their argument would in all cases be enforced by the sword; this was the principle of their government and the law of their sect. It is to be regretted that the christian princes were too much inclined to a simi-

lar resort ; but this was not the law of the bible. The government of Spain used great exertions to bring over the infidels to the true faith, but the means were too much in the character of despotic princes, and had often more of compulsion than of persuasion in them. It is not probable that any measure in the power of the christians would have converted the whole body of the Moors, or have made many real converts among them ; a considerable number did bow to the cross, but their conversion was the result oftener of fear than of conviction ; they *apparently* ceased to be Mahometans, but few of them *really* became christians. An attachment, at least political, to their old sect, was sufficiently apparent ; an enmity to the christians was little less disguised. The Spanish christians suffered so much from the excesses of the infidels, and they again, so much from the christians, it became in a manner unavoidable, that one of the parties should be extirpated or exiled. The Mahometans were worsted and banished, a circumstance which, whatever may be advanced against its justice, has materially tended to the peace of Spain and of Europe. The Inquisition was resorted to as a powerful means of preventing the return of the Moors. Dr. O'Leary, in his observations on the introduction of the Inquisition into Spain and Portugal, makes the following observations :

“ In these two kingdoms the Inquisition owes its origin to causes much similar to those which gave it rise at Rome ; but causes, however, which did not so immediately affect the sovereign, who was blended with the common mass of monarchs, without any peculiar distinction to expose him to the hatred of mankind ; or to afford his assassin a plea of impunity, by alleging that he was the deliverer of the world, by ridding it of the enemy of the Son of God, described in the prophecies of Daniel, pointed out in the Revelations, and whose downfall was foretold at such a time by the most celebrated interpreters of Scripture.

“The Spaniards struggling for a long time with Mahomet’s followers who had invaded their country, and reduced them not only to the most abject slavery, but moreover forced them to supply the fire of their lusts with continual fuel, by sending an annual tribute of christian virgins to their seraglios, made at last that great effort so memorable in history.

“It is well known that before the defeat of the Moors, and their total expulsion from the Spanish dominions, they were preparing underhand for war, and had their leaders already chosen. Banished for ever from a kingdom where they had trampled on the laws which all christians, and even heathen fathers deemed most sacred, a barrier to their return was erected; and, as by their own laws, every christian who has had a connexion with a Mahometan woman, is to pass through the fire, the tables were turned on themselves, and the expectants of an earthly paradise were threatened with the faggot, if they returned to initiate the children of christians into their mysteries.”

Let us make this case our own for a moment. Let us suppose that the sooty descendants of Africa, who did not invade this country, but who were dragged into it against their will, should presume to treat the white population, as the Moors did the Spaniards, what would be the conduct of the Americans? Would the legislature of Virginia enact any or what laws against the negroes who meditated or organized rebellion, would the Virginia people have any objection to an *auto de fe*, were it proposed as a means of preserving their properties, their lives and their liberty? Would the pious people of New-England institute no inquisition in case the negroes finding themselves defeated in the south, should try their fortune in the east? Would the bible society folks, with christian patience and resignation, unresistingly submit to such an enemy? They would not, and they ought not. I am not prepared with an opinion as to the length which

reason and justice should dictate as a defence against such an enemy.

Many of the Catholic clergy who naturally feared the return of the infidels, were easily prevailed on to take an active part in the transactions of the Inquisition. Without pretending to approve or excuse their having done so, it should not be passed over unnoticed, that these ecclesiastics received their commissions from the *civil* authority, and acted as officers or magistrates of the king. It would be unfair to charge their acts under commissions thus derived, to a religion of which they were the ministers. As well might the acts of Cranmer and other British prelates who held civil offices in England, as well might the acts of the Protestant clergy who now hold civil commissions from the British king, be all charged to religion. It seems unreasonable to accuse religion in any form, with acts which it disavows. Such charge amounts to a defence of those civil despotic governments to which we owe, that man is not every where free: it is an exculpation of the guilty, it is an accusation of the innocent.

It is the interest of religion to keep the regulation of its concerns apart from those of the civil government, as it otherwise would be exposed to a loss of the independence so necessary to its purity. The alliance of the civil with the religious concerns of the people, is courted by the civil power, and often for purposes which religion would reject. It never tends to the extension of civil liberty, but always strengthens the civil arm, and that to the disadvantage of the people, and often to the degradation or corruption of the clergy. Religion can maintain itself apart from the civil government, save that protection to its members and congregations, which, as a peace preserving measure, is extended to individuals and societies generally; and it has preserved itself even when that protection was denied. The connexion between church and state seldom honours or exalts religion;

the benefit is to the civil government only, and is seldom courted by the government which is in itself good, because that which is good confides in its own virtue. The governments of England, France, and Spain have sought an alliance with the clergy, whom they endeavoured, and too often successfully, to corrupt; the government of the United States relying on its own purity as its support, has not attempted any connexion with the church, and is, I will venture to assert, the most stable in the world. These cases produce particular illustrations that the alliance of church and state is not necessary to the proper subsistence of either, and may be injurious. In England it produced the High Court of Commission, in Spain the Inquisition, in Ireland the Penal Code; in America, its absence produced CIVIL and RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

Religious sects must be tried by their own laws and tenets, if we would come at a true picture of their condition. The Roman Catholic church makes a distinction between fundamental articles of faith, and exterior points of discipline. "The former are considered as immutable truths, and regard the whole church. The latter are frequently limited, with respect both to time and place, and have no force whatever upon individuals until they are *received* and published in the several parts of christendom; by the civil power, in what regards civil matter; and by the ecclesiastical, in what appertains to the church."* From this it may be collected, that the Inquisition, if a fundamental tenet of the Catholic church, must have been immutable, and its reception obligatory on every Catholic, its institution a necessary and indispensable appendage to the Catholic religion wherever that religion was introduced. That such was not the case is sufficiently proven by the fact, that it has not been introduced into every Catholic country, that many of

* Milner, Letter 4, to a Prebendary.

the Catholic countries know nothing about it,* that it never was introduced into Catholic England. The persecutions during the reign of Mary was not only not authorized by the Pope or the clergy, but opposed by both. Cardinal Pole, the Pope's legate, condemned the queen's conduct in a council of Catholic bishops held in England during her reign, and the Catholic clergy boldly supported this council, in public discourses from the pulpit. Would this be so, had a bloody persecution been a tenet of the Catholic faith? Would the clergy oppose a tenet of their religion at a time when such opposition could not benefit them in any manner, and when in fact it exposed them to the anger and to the malice of the queen. This single circumstance is so conclusively in support of the position I have thus far laboured to maintain, that no dispassionate reader can for a moment remain doubtful on the subject. I can bring a multitude of arguments and evidences in support of the above; I am, however, restrained by the hope that it is unnecessary, and by a desire to bring my subject to a close, I heartily regret the necessity of its introduction, and I will quit it, in the conviction that, even in this small work, enough is offered to silence, if not to shame, those who, from interested motives, would libel religion; and to convince all, that the bloody acts of the Inquisition are not founded on any tenet of the Catholic church, "Give me leave, (says Dr. Milner) to observe to you, that the practices and the very existence of the Inquisition, has as little connection with the Catholic religion, as they have with my history of Winchester, in which they are not, to my recollection, once mentioned."

There is an inquisition which is necessary to religion, which, in order to distinguish it from that so ge-

* "Several Catholic countries, dreading the miseries which such a tribunal would produce, persevered in refusing to admit it." *Rev. J. Sturges, Protestant Prebendary of Winchester.*

nerally reprobated, I would denominate the *religious*. It belonged to the Catholic church at all times, as well before as during and since the time of Innocent the Third; it is in operation, and is acted on by all religious sects however various or opposing their tenets, differing in degrees of rigidity, and sometimes in form, but, in principle, the same. This is an inquiry into the practices and lives of the individual members, particularly as respects a conformity to established tenets. The proceedings are always marked by forbearance and charity, the penalty seldom exceeding reprimand, and never reaching to the privation of life or limb.* This inquisition so necessary to religion, and conducive to its purity, is also admirably calculated to promote and preserve morality. It is a fair commentary on the Inquisition to which I have hitherto principally alluded: they are so unlike that a person of the least observation must see they are not of the same stock: the counterfeit could not easily be mistaken for the genuine.

There are known and established principles appertaining to the Catholic religion, which go decidedly to prove, that the Catholic religion could not sanction, much less institute, an inquisition at once cruel and bloody. Among these principles are the following:

1. The church disclaims the right of the sword, and the use of fines and confiscations to promote her spiritual ends.†

2. The church has no power over life or limb.‡

3. The last resource of the church is only a canonical censure. Those censures she never denounces, but against her own rebellious children, reared up in her own bosom.§

It would be a useless expenditure of time to dwell as long as I might, on the above principles, with a mere

* "The church has no power over life, limb, the rights of sovereigns, the property of individuals, or any temporal concern whatsoever."

O'LEARY.

† Ib. p. 185.

‡ Ib. p. 200.

§ Ib. 207.

view to prove that they are sanctioned and received by the church. It will be well enough to do so, when points are brought to issue by their denial, or their being disputed by others. I am satisfied, when this will be the case, to bear the *onus probandi*.

It should however be here observed generally, that although Catholic councils condemned heresies, they never touched the persons of the accused, but left them at liberty, or to be disposed of by the civil authority; many are the instances wherein the church authorities, and individual ministers, have interfered with the civil authorities, although not always successfully, to save the criminals from the rigour of the laws. We have seen that Cardinal Pole, the Pope's legate in England, opposed the sanguinary course of Queen Mary in England, although the prosecutions of this queen against her Protestant subjects, were often for the suppression of treasonable conspiracies against herself, than for the exercise of their religion, and in this respect unlike the persecutions of Queen Elizabeth against her loyal Catholic subjects, which were in almost every instance, for the suppression of their religion. St. Austin zealously craved mercy of the African governors for the Donatists, a sect remarkable for their atrocities and cruelties. Nor were the church authorities unmindful of the excesses committed by some of the clergy. A council of the church refused to admit to its deliberations any bishop charged with persecuting the Priscillianists, beyond the mild measures of the church. Two Spanish bishops who petitioned the tyrant Maximus to put Priscillians to death, were themselves banished; yet there were no heretics more dangerous in a state than the Priscillians, whose maxim was to swear and forswear themselves rather than betray their secrets.

The councils of Toledo and Lateran* condemn the use of violence to enforce belief, and reject bloody executions on the score of religion.

* O'Leary.

The Popes themselves opposed the introduction of the Inquisition into Venice. What then becomes of the assertion, that persecution is a fundamental tenet of the Catholic church? It may just as well be said of the Protestant; in truth it is not a tenet of either.

“The spirit of the church (says the Abbe Fleury) was in such a manner, the spirit of meekness and charity, that she prevented as much as in her power, the death of criminals and even of her most cruel enemies. You have seen how the lives of the murderers of the martyrs of Aunania were saved. You have seen how much the church detested the indiscreet zeal of those bishops, who persecuted the heresiarch Priscillian to death. In general, the church saved the lives of all criminals, as far as she had power.”

The following from Dr. O’Leary is strong evidence that whatever may have been the acts of kings, governments, or priests, the church never sanctioned cruelty, torture, or bloody executions, and could not have any part in the Spanish, Portuguese, or any other Inquisition.

“If in after ages (says the Doctor) some popes and bishops deviated from the plan of meekness and moderation, their conduct should not involve a consequence injurious to the principles of the Catholic church, which *condemns such proceedings*. The religion of Catholics and Protestants condemns frauds, drunkenness, revenge, duelling, perjury, &c. Some of their relaxed and impious writers have even attempted not only to palliate but to apologize for such disorders. The children of the christian religion daily practice them: is the christian religion accountable for the breach of its laws?”

General councils have never presumed on such power as is assumed by the British Parliament. The councils are bound by a law that is given them from above, and the validity of which they acknowledge; in this respect, they are subject to a controlling power. It is not so with the parliament. Cromwell, the min-

ister of Henry the Eighth, demanded of the judges, whether a person could be attainted, without giving him any trial, or citing him to appear before parliament. The judges replied, that no inferior court could act in that arbitrary manner; but the parliament being the supreme judicature, their proceedings could not be called in question, but must remain good in law.

Rescripts of popes do not constitute articles of faith. More properly might it be said that a royal British proclamation or an act of the British Parliament constitutes an article of Protestant faith: for the king is head of the church, and the parliament is omnipotent.

Religious tenets apart, there are rational evidences, and plain deductions, strongly, nay conclusively, in support of the position, that religion had not and could not have any agency in the sanguinary decrees of the Inquisition.

Had the Inquisition been connected with religion, as a fundamental tenet, it would not remain for Innocent the Third to discover that it was incumbent on the head of the church, as the administrator of the law, to put the Inquisition in operation. It would have been attended to by some, or by all the Popes who governed the church during twelve centuries before the elevation of Innocent the Third; and if it had not been a tenet of the church, the Pope not of his own free will makes it one. "All the Popes' bulls from the time of St. Peter, to the end of ages, cannot make an article of faith for Roman Catholics, without the acceptance of the Universal church; and the church has no power over the temporals of kings, much less to command any thing against the laws of God.

Catholics never follow an arbitrary doctrine. *The standard is fixed*; the boundaries are prescribed, and

the Pope himself cannot remove them : they consider him as head of the church—subordination in every society, requires pre-eminence in its rulers, but his will is not their creed.”*

Had the Inquisition been a tenet of Catholic faith, every Catholic prince and people would be bound to adopt it, yet how many countries have either neglected or refused to do so. It was not known before the time of Innocent the Third, not while the entire christian world was Catholic, not until scisms and heresies sprang up. England did not adopt it at any time, not even during the reign of John, who was a contemporary of Innocent the Third; nor during the reign of five Henrys, five Edwards, and two Richards, during all which reigns England was Catholic, nor does it appear that they were required to adopt it. Will it be supposed that being required to introduce it, they refused? Why then was not John, when he made the most entire submission to the Pope, been required to introduce it? Why did not Mary introduce it? She was not too tender-hearted, or too sparing of the lives of her subjects; on the contrary, she was so bloody and unrelenting, she might stand competition with the worst of the inquisitors, however cruel or fierce: she did indeed set up an inquisition, but it was not by papal authority, and although it was that of a Catholic princess against her Protestant subjects, yet was it not Romish, but strictly British, differing from those of the preceding and succeeding reigns only in this, that it directed its violence against a different class of the subjects. The British persecutions, whether by Catholic or Protestant princes, whether against Protestant or Catholic subjects, were equally dishonourable to humanity, and opposed by the mild code left on earth by that God who was himself all mildness and forbearance. It gave an argument to the Deist, rendered the civil government hated, and placed the cha-

* O'Leary.

racter of the clergy in no envious light. Mr. Hume, who was politically a Protestant, and who assails the Catholics with indecent violence, makes the following remarks on the sect to which he ostensibly adhered :

“ Though the Protestant divines had ventured to renounce opinions, deemed certain for so many ages, they regarded in their turn, the new system so certain, that they could bear no contradiction with regard to it ; and they were ready to burn in the same flames, from which they themselves had so narrowly escaped, every one that had the assurance to oppose them.”

Whatever may have been the opinion of the Pope, it is sufficiently evident, the Catholic people ever ready to obey the tenets of the Church, have never acted under the impression, that the Inquisition was a religious institution, or that its ordinances were binding on them, for they have, in every country, inveighed against it, except when silenced by the iron hand of civil power. We have the authority of Montague, that the English Catholics were loud in their execrations of the persecutions of the Protestants by the Inquisition of queen Mary ; yet they were not spared on that account, when Elizabeth's Inquisition was turned against themselves. I hazard nothing in saying, that were Pope Leo to send an army of bishops to the United States of America, in order to institute an inquisition, an army of Catholics could be quickly found to resist the unchristian attempt.

The clergy were no less ready than the laity to inveigh against the encroachments of the Pope, which would not be the case could he produce the sanction of the church in support of his acts.* In the submis-

* “ Admitting as I have explicitly and repeatedly done, that pontiffs, like other men, were liable to the self-love and passions of human nature, it would be a greater miracle than any recorded in holy writ, if some of them had not abused both their spiritual supremacy, and their temporal principality, to the gratification of their ambition and avarice. Some abuses of this nature

sion paid by so large a portion of the christian world to the Pope, as its universal head, and in the long continued duration of their obedience to the spiritual guide, with such strong incitements to shake it off, and so few worldly inducements to continue it, controversialists have found arguments so strong in defence of Roman Catholic tenets, that the most learned and zealous of the reformers have been vastly embarrassed to account for this obedience on any other principle, than that of its orthodoxy. That it was not "blind obedience," may be inferred from the repeated opposition which the Pope met from the Catholics of all countries, whenever he required a submission to ordinances to which they did not feel themselves bound to yield obedience, yet these *disobedient* children of the church were not condemned as heretics, nor even branded as scismatics, a circumstance in itself a conclusive evidence, that such conduct was not inconsistent with pure religion, and a just submission to its fundamental tenets. Were the inquisition one of these fundamental tenets, we would not find the Catholics every where condemning or opposing it; were it a fundamental tenet, those Catholics who, in all ages, suffered such severe persecutions because they would not relinquish their faith, would be found clinging to it, with all the pious zeal and holy adhesion with which they stuck by those tenets which they deemed, and which the church pronounced, to be fundamental. The church has not pronounced that a belief in the inquisition is an article of Catholic faith, the Pope has not maintained such doctrine, the Catholics have never heard such, except from those Protestants who knew nothing of the subject, or who, actuated by sel-

I have recorded, not in terms of approbation, as you suppose I was bound to do, but of strong censure, and I have shown, that they were resisted and condemned by the princes, prelates, and writers of those times, no less than they are at present."

Dr. Milner to Dr. Sturges, Let. 2.

fish motives, and hellish design, gave rise to a libel offensive to God, injurious to religion, destructive of morality, and of which the authors should be ashamed. If there be yet a person who can or will stand forward in support of the position, that a belief in the inquisition is (as Dr. Sturges would have it) an article of Catholic faith, then I can but regret the existence of an error which I know not how to remove, but which I believe one in ten thousand Protestants would not believe were they but to reflect on the subject. “The most monstrous absurdity that ever met with apologists in church or state, is the misdirected zeal that punishes the body for the sincerity of an erroneous conscience; whereas no person deserves more the severity of human laws, than the imposter who betrays it. The divines themselves, whose forced interpretations of scripture, and theological disputes, have armed sovereigns against their subjects, agree that no person can act against the immediate dictates of an erroneous conscience. Hence the Jew who is under a conviction that Christ is not God, would be guilty of gross idolatry, if from motives of worldly interest he worshipped him with the christians.* “Indeed the falsehood of this assertion (that persecution is a tenet of the Catholic church) without the necessity of any proof from me, glares in the face of our (Protestant) nobility and gentry who have made the tour of Europe, and who are conscious of having resided with as much peace and security in the Papal city of Rome as they have done in the Protestant city of Geneva.”†

The doctrine that the Catholic religion is in itself fundamentally cruel and sanguinary, is one great stay of the British monarchy, the chief prop of the aristocracy, the title of the British church to its tithes, and estates, and privileges, the sum and history of the penal code enacted against Catholics. This doctrine

* O'Leary.

† Milner.

was imported into the British colonies in America. "History and experience prove that this outcry against Catholics, as *persecutors*, is generally heard from men of intolerant principles, who make use of it as a pretext for *persecuting* them." It may be hoped, it must be, that the men of America will not swallow this poisonous drug. Americans should send it back to the "mother country," as they sent back the red coated minions of tyranny, or they should fling into the sea, as they did the British cargoes of TEA.

Americans, I have performed the task I proposed to myself, in this essay; I did so, as well as slender talents, and the little time I could apply to it, would permit. I did not write for the Englishman, but for *you*. The well bred Englishman needs no instruction on this point, he does not, for a moment, believe that the inquisition in Spain, or the high court of commission in England, had ever emanated from revealed religion, as practised by either Catholic or Protestant, he condemns both inquisitions with one condemnation. The illiterate or nearly illiterate Englishman, being kept in a state of absolute ignorance, or what is perhaps worse, an instruction fitted and limited to the level of that poison which is administered by his own government, is incapable of discovering his error, or ridding himself of a deep rooted prejudice, and will so remain until some great political and national change in the conduct of his rulers, or in the form of his government, will dissolve a charm by which he seems spell-bound, and relieve the nation from the incubus that oppresses it. Until some great change will take place in the general education in England, it will be useless in an humble individual to attempt an overthrow of the errors under which Englishmen labour.

Americans, for you these pages are chiefly intended. You are an enlightened people, literature and

science are laid open to you all, with an unsparing hand, you are free, you have rid yourselves of the misgovernment under the pressure of which you also laboured, but you have in vain rid yourselves of the chain which bound you in slavery, if you will not also cure the festering wound it inflicted. A hatred of popery or of any sect or creed, is unworthy of freemen, it is contrary to pure religion and sound reason, and is a character of barbarity. To believe that a religion, which endured so long, in so many countries, and under every form of government, in the sunshine of prosperity, and under the scourge of persecution, could be constitutionally bloody, is ridiculous, is an assumption opposed by revelation, and unsupported by an atom of evidence. I am desirous that liberality, liberty, and religion should, in this regenerated land, go hand in hand, that practices might square with professions, that, while we profess to enjoy civil and religious liberty, we should be slow in attaching to any portion of the citizens, sentiments which if really entertained, would justly exclude them from society, and make them proper objects of an outlawry.

I have, in my first page, said that the government of the United States is not chargeable, directly or indirectly, with the erection of any civil tribunal, to judge or control the consciences of men. In closing my little work, I very willingly again bear evidence to this truth; but, would wish to be understood, as applying it simply to the general government. My acquaintance with the constitutions or laws of the individual states, is too limited to enable me treat of each of them, as fully as I could wish, and as my subject seems to demand.

I am very willing to suppose, nay to believe, that, where matter inconsistent with perfect liberty of conscience has found its way into the laws of any of the individual states, it was owing to inadvertence. It will be well for the representatives of the people in the several states, to inquire how far such has been the

case. The public opinion would doubtless sanction the repeal of every such law.

I have (page 11) alluded to the Quakers of Pennsylvania and the Catholics of Maryland, as exceptions to the spirit of persecution exercised, too generally, against each other, by the early settlers of British America: I alluded to the persecutions of christians by christians. The observation will I presume stand good as to both these States. It is however to be lamented, that in Maryland, a *test law*, (not exclusively, if in any degree, the work of Catholics) excludes from civil offices, persons not professing christianity. I can see no rational motive, no just pretension, for excluding the Jew from civil as well as religious liberty, whether he was born in the United States, or, being born elsewhere, became a citizen by adoption, and of his own free will. Curse on the law which gainsays the noble axiom that declares, "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these, are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The Jew has only to swear that he believes in the christian religion, and he is admitted to all the rights of a free citizen, although in his declaration he deposes to a falsehood. In this respect, the Jew in Maryland is situated, as the Catholic is in England, and the Protestant in Spain. Does the law punish a Jew, because he adheres to a faith in which he conscientiously believes; and reward with the high premium of CIVIL LIBERTY, the reprobate who can swear to a falsehood. Are proscription and degradation to be attendant on error, honours and preferment to be squandered on the perjurer?

The constitution of the State of New-York was formed in the year 1777. The last clause of it empowering the legislature to enact laws for the naturalization of foreigners, contained a condition, which would preclude Catholics from being admitted to citizenship, by virtue of any such law. The legislature

did not act on it, it remained, like a dead statute, for more than forty years, a disgraceful appendage to the first charter of liberty, which the freemen of New-York made for themselves. The new constitution contains no such provision, nor any on that subject, the general law being deemed sufficient for that purpose. Within the last twenty years, the electors of the city of New-York sent a Roman Catholic to the State legislature. On his presenting himself in the Capitol of the State, and proposing to enter on the duties assigned him by his constituents, he found that, although a native American, he could not be admitted to the State legislature, without abjuring his religion. To his honour be it said, he declined doing so; and to the honour of the legislature be it said, that a law promptly and unanimously passed, by which the obstacle was removed. In their association with this citizen, the other members of the legislature found nothing to contaminate their morals, or to disturb their patriotism. The New-York constitution and statute-book are no longer disgraced by any law offensive or injurious to any class of citizens. In this, as in other respects, it stands a bright example worthy of imitation by the sister States.

The constitutional provisions yet in force in the States of North Carolina and New-Jersey, bear hard on the Roman Catholics who reside in these States; in neither of which can a Catholic hold a civil employment under the government, without an act of previous apostacy, which no wise government should ever require of the citizen. It is but a lure to the weak, a bait for the unprincipled, the honest Catholic will not accept it; and he who is too ready to swallow it, should be treated with suspicion, for he who can put a price on his religion, will be at least as ready to do the like with his country. The person who can deny his faith to secure the comforts of worldly wealth or grandeur, will even sell his country for a "mess of pottage." It was said that "the British Catholics, between

their fellow subjects and the throne, are like the forlorn hope between two armies: they are doomed to civil destruction between both." The Catholics in North Carolina and New-Jersey are not in as dangerous a situation as they would be in England, and will not require as many years of ineffectual petitioning to the legislature for redress of grievance. I feel satisfied that a proper and respectful appeal to the legislatures of these States would be as promptly and as favourably attended to as was the case in New-York. God rejects a homage which the heart belies; the State should be cautious how it may receive a similar homage from the man who tenders it perhaps deceitfully in return for pelf. Christ does not choose for subjects but those who enlist voluntarily. What security is there that those who deny a faith in which they were educated, to get possession of advantages from which they were on account of that faith, excluded, are not hypocrites. Does the conformist sin, and, if he does, is not the State accessory? Faith is a gift of God; how dare man provide a penalty on those who conscientiously profess it. If heresy should not be punished, neither should any religious tenet be condemned, or its votaries proscribed, by the civil law.

A recent document has just come to my hand, which, had it been of earlier date, and have reached me sooner, I would have noticed in another part of this work, and have extracted more largely from it than I now conveniently can. This document is dated Charleston, (S. C.) Oct. 8, 1825, and purports to be, an address, "to the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the Canadas, Nova Scotia, and other Roman Catholic subjects in America, of the king of Great Britain and Ireland," by the Right Rev. Dr. England, Catholic bishop of Charleston.

The name of Dr. England has been frequently before the American public, and his character is well remembered in Ireland, his native country. In religion, he is mild but firm, liberal yet orthodox; as a

scholar, he is highly accomplished ; as a preacher, he displays uncommon eloquence ; as a patriot, he is distinguished ; as a Catholic, and as a man, he would be as quick to deny the power of the Pope to persecute the Protestant, as he properly is prompt in inveighing against the British government for persecuting the Catholic subjects. This respectable prelate is good authority for whatever he advances ; bold in support of truth in his native country, where power threatened to overthrow and ruin him, he is forbearing and patient in America, where no terror opposes, and no penal law hangs over him ; he has all the undisguised candour of O'Leary, the solid penetration of Milner, he is their equal in piety, and perhaps their superior in the pulpit. Addressing the Catholic inhabitants of Canada, this prelate says, "*why* are you now free from persecution at this side of the Atlantic ? I will tell you, because you are *neighbours of our glorious republic.*" This compliment to America will be duly appreciated, and should set every American on the inquiry, whether there exists any law derogatory to the character of a "glorious republic," whether there is practiced in the education of the rising generation, any thing that might make the citizens disunited, merely because they disagree in speculative points of religious doctrine.

Dr. England, after telling us, that, "the relaxations which Britain made in her worse than heathen code of persecution, were made through fear, without merit ; with a bad grace, when she could not avoid making them," gives us an enumeration of civil offices from which the Catholics of Ireland are excluded at this day, but to all which they would be eligible, could they conscientiously conform to the Protestant religion as established by law, or would they in defiance of conscience, swear to the orthodoxy of the thirty-nine articles. There are two paths either of which, although they seem to be in opposite directions, lead the convert with equal certainty to royal favour, the one is conviction ; the other, perjury.

“ They (the Irish Catholics) cannot (says Dr. England) be Privy Counsellors, Masters of the Rolls, Judges in the King’s Bench, Judges in the Common Pleas, Barons of the Exchequer, Secretary at War, Lords of the Admiralty, Lords in Parliament, Secretary of State, Chancellor of the Exchequer, President or Fellow of any College in any University, Secretary for the Colonies, Governor of a Colony, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Attorney General of England, or Attorney General of Ireland, Solicitor General, King’s Counsel, Member of any College of Physicians in England, Mayor of any City, Chief Magistrate of any Town Corporate, Member of the House of Commons, Sheriff of any County or City, Director of the Bank of England, Director of the Bank of Ireland, President of the Board of Trade—nor in either of an hundred other offices, which it would tire one to enumerate and you to read. They cannot endow any church, bequeath any property for any benefit to their religion, nor for any charity connected therewith.—They cannot establish any glebe for the maintenance of their clergy, they cannot confer any literary degrees upon their children in their schools or colleges, they have no share in the management of the funds granted for the education of the poor, but those funds are uniformly placed in the hands, and under the control of those hostile to the Catholic tenets, and who meanly use a variety of indirect and perplexing modes for drawing the poor Catholics, by their wants, to sell the religion of their children. The Catholic clergy are insulted and vilified on a thousand occasions, and in all party trials the Protestant Sheriffs, who return Juries, not by ballot, but by selection, are generally charged with being partial.”

The Bishop says to the Catholics of Canada, “ you have, where you dwell, *perfect* religious freedom.” Could he say so much to the Catholics of North Carolina and New-Jersey? It should here be observed, that the laws which oppress Catholics in the above

States, are not directed against the foreigner, but equally operate to the disadvantage of the native, although he or his father may have fought and bled in defence of their country, and laboured seven years to effect its independence.

The Bishop proceeds: "The Protestant dissenters in Great Britain and Ireland are also seriously oppressed, though compared with the Catholics their sufferings are trifling and light; yet they ought not to be subjected to any penalty or inconvenience for professing the religion of their choice. But to shut our eyes to the gross, ridiculous and monstrous tyranny of a Protestant government, saying, that every man has a right to be led by his own conscience *only* in matters of religion, and yet cruelly punishing men for the exercise of this conceded right. You will agree with me in the principle, that God gave to no government spiritual or temporal, a commission to inflict bodily or political punishment upon man for mere religious error. He reserves the infliction of such punishment as the obstinate heretic or the criminal infidel may deserve, to his own tribunal. He gives to the church authority to teach his doctrine, to administer his Sacraments, to regulate her discipline—and by spiritual censures to punish her refractory members. The people he leaves the right to constitute their government; upon the government he imposes the obligation of preserving peace and securing property. But to neither has he committed the decision of man's eternal destiny; this he reserves for himself; to neither has he given a commission to propagate his doctrine by cruelty, but to all he has given a command to love one another."

Americans, there are rights naturally inherent, of which the citizen cannot properly be deprived by any government, and which cannot be alienated by the citizen himself, without committing a violent act of self-debasement. Foremost of these rights, stands that of serving the God of all, by such forms, ceremo-

nies, and agreeably to such tenents as the individual conscientiously believes to be incumbent. Any law to prevent the exercise of religion, to regulate its forms, to grant exclusive rights to one sect, or to impose disqualifications on another, is a deviation from correct theory of government, and is at variance with those principles publicly declared by all, or by most of the republican constitutions of America. That New-York did fall into this error, is evident, that she corrected the error the moment she became sensible of it, is in proof that the spirit of justice reigned in her councils; and justifies the presumption, that inadvertence, and not evil design, gave rise to the law of 1801, which required that every person appointed to office whether civil or military, should, before entering upon the execution of the same, "renounce and abjure all allegiance and subjection to all and every king, prince, potentate and state, in all matters *ecclesiastical* as well as civil." The new constitution provides that no other test than the following be required of the citizen, as a qualification for holding an office. "I do solemnly swear (or affirm as the case may be) that I will support the constitution of the United States, and the constitution of the State of New-York, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of to the best of my ability."

Republicans should reflect, that every act which confers exclusive political privileges on any one sect of christians, or abridges the privileges of another, partakes, so far as the law extends, of the persecutions which we condemn in the Europeans; and although it touches not life or limb, although it uses not racks or torture, and resorts not to an *auto de fete*, yet it imposes an injury which may operate as a heavy penalty. It is *inquisitorial* and calculated to produce dislike and even hatred of one citizen against the other. The enemies of the Catholic religion have fastened on the inquisition as a means of bringing the hatred of all other sects on the Catholic, the persecutions of

Catholics in Britain, has brought the Protestant religion into contempt there, and has caused numbers to forsake the religion altogether. Such will be the case in America, unless every remnant of persecution, unless every species of religious inquisition be entirely laid aside by the civil authorities ; nor will this be sufficient unless parents will cease to instil religious antipathies into their children ; and public teachers become instructors of brotherly love, instead of poisoning the infant mind with prejudices not easily eradicated when once they take root. I am not entering into any discussion of a theological nature, which the reader must have already observed is no part of my design. I am not seeking a preference for any one religion, nor yet inviting the adoption of a general creed, nor do I seek to raise deism or infidelity on the ruins of revelation and religion, but I seek, as the common right of every citizen, that he be not questioned in any shape by the civil authority, and that he suffer no injury through the law of the land, on account of his religious opinions. Persecution in the old world has been the prop of despotism : in the new world, it has disfigured liberty. Its adoption, in however mild a shape, is persecution still. Suffered to remain, it might grow into strength and be approximating to the height it attained in Europe. Religious persecution and sound liberty cannot reside together, one of them must overthrow the other.

It is a pleasing reflection, that the tendency towards religious persecution which has been planted in this country by its former *royal* rulers, is withering under an order of things more consonant to republicanism, and that public opinion is fast approaching to the conviction, that civil liberty must be but a name, unless connected with a perfect freedom of conscience on religious subjects. My object is to hasten the consummation of so happy a result, and proud indeed would I be, could I be certain, that my humble efforts had any influence to remove from the land of freedom

every trait of ill-grounded prejudice. I sincerely wish to see the citizens, one and all, become as amiable as christians, as they are free as men.

I have quoted frequently from the learned, liberal, and enlightened O'Leary ; I cannot close this work better or more suitably, than by giving a quotation which coming from such an authority, should of itself, put at rest the question, whether the inquisition be grounded on a fundamental tenet of the Catholic religion.

“ Let legislators who were the first to invent the cruel method of punishing errors of the mind with the excruciating tortures of the body, and anticipating the rigour of eternal justice, answer for their own laws, I am of opinion that the true religion, propagated by the effusion of the blood of its martyrs, would still triumph without burning the flesh of heretics ; and the Protestant and Catholic legislators who have substituted the blazing pile in the room of Phalaris's brazen bull, might have pointed out a more lenient punishment for victims, who, in their opinion, had no prospect during the interminable space of a boundless eternity, but that of passing from one fire into another.”



AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE HIBERNIAN SOCIETY

OF

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,

IN

SAINT MARY'S CHURCH,

ON

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY, THE 17TH MARCH, 1895.

BY THE

REV. JOSEPH W. FAIRCLOUGH, A.M.

(CHAPLAIN.)

"Join with your piety, brotherly love, and with brotherly love, charity."

2 EPIS. PETER, 1 CHAP. V. 5, 7.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE SOCIETY.

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1895

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED

Before the Hibernian Society

OF ALEXANDRIA.

Join with your piety brotherly love, and with brotherly love, charity. 11. Epis. Pet. ch. i. v. 5, 7.

Though these words of the Holy Apostle may be applied to Christians in general, I have adopted them as being peculiarly applicable to our society in particular. True genuine piety will always produce brotherly love, and brotherly love cannot exist in the heart without manifesting itself in deeds of charity. The truly good man will always be a charitable man; he will put forth his exertions to promote as extensively as possible, the great cause of charity. The spirit of brotherly love, which is consummated by charity, has united us together that the sacred gifts of charity might be more widely, as well as more judiciously, diffused among our suffering brethren. Such being, as I trust and am willing to believe, the feelings and motives which actuate every member of our body, all will acknowledge the propriety of my text as applied to the HIBERNIAN SOCIETY.

We have assembled here, my brethren and Christian friends, to celebrate the festival of the great and glorious patron of Ireland, St. Patrick. It is a name which every honest, every virtuous Irishman should hold dear in his remembrance—should warmly cherish in his heart. Not only because it is associated with his earliest recollections, the innocent days of his childhood, but because it is intimately connected with his nearest and dearest interests. His mind rests with melancholy pleasure upon the scenes of his earliest youth as they pass in rapid quick succession before his pained and

7.13.16. 1948-7-2

troubled fancy. When, unconscious of his own enslaved state, and that of his degraded country, ignorant that even then he was dragging after him the chain of servitude, which became heavier at every move, another day of joy and gladness rose upon him with every morning's sun, and peace and delight and happiness were wafted to him upon the wings of the evening zephyrs. But his short dream of happiness soon vanished—it fled like a shadow, like a phantom of the night from his busy enchanted imagination, and he started from his trance, and found himself in fetters. A host of mingled feelings, a promiscuous crowd of dormant ideas start into existence at the very sound of the name of St. Patrick. The joyous festive meetings on St. Patrick's day, over which guileless innocence presided, when young and unsuspecting hearts as yet untainted by vice and corruption, as yet unhackneyed in the deceitful wiles of the world, mixed together in social glee and harmony; when every sound spoke happiness, and every soul thrilled with pleasure, rush like a torrent upon his imagination, he loves to dwell upon the sweet idea, till it disappears from his fancy, and he is forced to heave a deep and heavy sigh of regret, that those happy days are past and gone, never, never more to return. Is it not then natural for an Irishman to celebrate the festival of St. Patrick, which recalls to his memory the fond recollection of scenes long passed by; which tends to rouse up in his soul feelings of the most noble, the most generous, the most exalted nature towards his native, his much beloved country. How can he resist the impulse? The birth days of kings and potentates are celebrated in their respective dominions, with all the empty pomp of parade and pageantry. Their cringing vassals follow in their train, bent beneath the heavy yoke of slavery, and forced to give utterance to expressions of joy and hilarity, whilst grief and oppression prey upon their hearts. The birth days of heroes, whose great souls disdained to live the slaves of tyranny and despotism, and resolved to live subject only to the government of wise and equitable laws, agreeably to the dictates of natural justice; who have

nobly fought and bled in their country's cause; who have wrenched her from the tyrant's grasp, and made her free, deserve, justly deserve, to be honored, to be celebrated by a grateful people. Ingratitude, my brethren, whether moral or political, is a great vice, and the characters of the perpetrators deserve to be branded with lasting infamy. To the shame of degraded human nature be it spoken, the annals of history are but too replete with instances of the foulest ingratitude in return for the most signal services. The discoverer of the Western World, the now free America, the asylum and the home of the exile and the stranger, was loaded with heavy irons, and in that ignominious condition brought into the presence of the unprincipled avaricious despot, to whom he had volunteered his services, and whose treasures he had filled with the wealth of the new world. This circumstance alone has affixed a stigma to the name of Ferdinand, which no time will ever obliterate. Divine Providence is now exacting from Spain a just retribution for all her base ingratitude, for all her sins committed against the sanctity of humanity; for all her atrocious bloody deeds of guilt and murder. But why should I refer to a period so far remote for instances of ingratitude? Is there no name nearer to our own times than the close of the fifteenth century, of an individual, who purchased, at the hazard of his life, his country's freedom; whose illustrious actions, whilst they shed a bright glory upon the page of history, serve also to render more daring the dark blots of ingratitude, in the character of those for whom he procured their freedom? Is there no illustrious personage who ought not only to have lived for ever, but for ever to have been dearly cherished in the hearts of his countrymen, the memory of whom has not gradually, might it not be said, speedily, died away; whose birth day at present brings nothing to their minds, in the language of the poet—

“To think it better than the day before,
Or any other in the course of time,
That dully took its turn and was forgotten.”

But time has proved, which is the best of all tests, that this reproach can never be coupled with the name of an Irishman. Fourteen hundred years has Ireland revered the name of Patrick. No matter into what corner of the globe an Irishman's hard fate may have cast him; no matter how far distant he may be from the green fields of his nativity, the home of his fathers, the memory of his patron Saint blooms in his heart as fresh and as green as the shamrock he wears in his bosom. May the shamrock continue to be, as it was used by St. Patrick, the emblem of unity! May it always denote the union of Irish hearts. Let Irishmen be united in aiding and befriending one another throughout the world. Let them never forget that, though they may have branched forth into a thousand different directions over the surface of the earth, their common stock stands in Ireland: let not one limb be severed off from the main body, but let every branch contribute to the health and beauty of the whole, and thus flourish together in all their pristine vigor, and perennial greenness. To the honor of Irishmen be it said, that this unanimity generally prevails. There is hardly a city or town of any note in this widely extended republic, in which an HIBERNIAN SOCIETY has not been organized for the relief of their suffering countrymen. And were I an Irishman, or the descendant of an Irishman, residing in a place where one of these societies was formed, I should feel ashamed of myself, I should feel myself degraded even in my own estimation, did not my name appear enrolled on the list of its members. Englishman that I am, I congratulate myself in being permitted to be a member of the society in this city, and I feel proud at the honor which it has conferred upon me.

But, my Christian brethren, there is another circumstance which ought to be a still stronger inducement to every Irishman, to celebrate in a becoming manner the festival of St. Patrick. A circumstance with which the nearest and best interests of Ireland have, for centuries upon centuries, been coupled; a circumstance of itself alone sufficient to sanctify, to canonize, in the estimation of every good man the name of Patrick!

Ireland, under Divine Providence, is indebted to the laborious exertions and holy zeal of St. Patrick for the blessings of Christianity. In proportion to the nature and extent of the favor conferred, should gratitude be manifested. As then the eternal bliss of heaven, which the belief and practice of the Christian religion will infallibly secure to us, surpasses, both in nature and extent, and in its ultimate effects, every temporal benefit, however great it may be supposed to be, so should our gratitude for this Divine favor, exceed that which we render for any earthly blessing. It is not my intention at present, my brethren, to speak the praises of our patron saint; this I attempted only upon a former occasion; for in truth his exalted merits soar far above the reach of any panegyric. The virtues of Christian Ireland, the "Island of Saints," as it has been emphatically and justly called, have, for fourteen centuries, proclaimed his merits. Any feeble effort of mine is therefore unnecessary; I cannot raise him higher in the estimation of a grateful people than in what he at present stands. But though his merits be not the theme of eulogy on this festal day, there are events connected with it which will tend to fill the soul with sentiments of a much nobler, a much more exalted nature. The annual celebration of the Saint's festival, naturally as it were excites in the breasts of Irishmen feelings of love and gratitude towards that all-kind and beneficent Being who employed him as an instrument in his hands, to christianize heathen Ireland. It is an epoch sacred in her annals. View, my Christian friends, for a short moment only, the state of Ireland previous to the introduction of Christianity. Look to that dark and dismal period in Irish history, when sceptred barbarism sat enthroned in twenty rude unshapely palaces; when a multitude of ferocious tribes, headed by the furies with their flaming brands, rushed forth at the savage yell of war, to deeds of barbaric cruelty, massacre and murder, till the torch became extinguished in the foe-man's blood. Behold the scenes of havoc and desolation which ensued, and you will mourn over the degradation of human nature. Contemplate your native

country enveloped in the thick darkness of superstition, which like that of Egypt could be felt: your forefathers prostrate in blind and stupid adoration at the foot of some misshapen idol, their hands streaming with the blood of their own children, whom they had inhumanly sacrificed to the demons of their idolatry. But let us turn away from this midnight state of things, it is too gloomy for the mind to rest on: turn away from this mournful, melancholy spectacle; from this total prostration of the noblest work of God, the human intellect, and cast your eyes upon the bright sun of religion rising upon the horison of Ireland, spreading around him his soft and genial rays. Follow him in his progress, and mark how the dark clouds of heathenish superstition vanish from before him as he rises in his splendour: the temples of the idols crumble into dust; the groves of the Druids wither at his approach, as he advances to his meridian glory, beaming down his bright illuminating rays, over the whole surface of an hitherto benighted island. Instead of the black flag of superstition, the spotless triumphant banner of the cross, was seen waving in the firmament. As Dagon, the God of the Philistines, fell prostrate before the ark of the covenant, as the Oracle of Delphos was struck dumb when the world's Redeemer came, so did the pagan Gods of Ireland fall, at the approach of the crucified God of Christianity. Instead of the shocking, impious rites of idolatry, from which humanity recoils with horror, the true worship of the true God, the Omnipotent Creator of the universe, was every where established, and his praises sung in Ireland's most distant corner. How different, my Christian friends, is this scene from that we lately viewed; how changed the face of Ireland. Nothing but the all-subduing influence of religion can ever effectually soften the hard features of barbarism, can ever humanize the mind of man. Such have been its blessed effects upon the people of Ireland. What gratitude then is due to that primary source from whence these blessings flowed? None of us can ever be sufficiently grateful to that kind and bountiful Being who has gratuitously bestowed upon us the blessings of revealed religion.

but we can at least, to the utmost of our power, endeavor to manifest our gratitude. Let it never be said that ingratitude to God for his benefits, or ingratitude of any description whatever, ever tarnished the character of an Irishman. Let not the recording Angel ever have to register against him this foul crime in the awful book of judgment; and from the manner in which the festival of this day has been celebrated I hope he will not. The morn has not been ushered in by the loud pealings of artillery; not a gun been fired to announce the day of St. Patrick; no unmeaning shew and parade has distinguished it from any other; but it has been distinguished by other far more appropriate demonstrations of sentiment and feeling suited much better to the occasion. The sons of St. Patrick, for in the words of St. Paul, "*in Christ Jesus has he begotten you through the gospel.*" have repaired in solemn dignified silence to the temple of the most high, to pour forth on their bended knees before his holy altar, the overflowing fullness of their grateful hearts. To be present during the celebration of the holy SACRIFICE of the MASS which has been offered up to Almighty God as a thanksgiving for the blessings of religion conferred upon their forefathers and transmitted to themselves. A sacrifice which was first offered up in Ireland by St. Patrick, to draw down the blessing of Heaven upon his mission. The sacrifice was accepted; his prayer was heard, and his labours crowned with success. They have come hither to crave a blessing upon our institution, to entreat the God of unity and of charity to second their laudable endeavors in promoting his own holy cause, the cause of charity. How superior, how far superior is this, to the manner in which birth-days are generally solemnized. Instead of riot and wanton indulgence, we are employed in thanking God for his favours, of which this day reminds us. Let us continue to solemnize the feast of St. Patrick in this manner, and the God of St. Patrick, who stood by him in all his trials, who gave a blessing to his every exertion, will continue to bless, to assist us.

Our SOCIETY has been organized, as its name imports, for the relief of poor suffering emigrants from suffering

Ireland. Its object is noble and at once speaks the character of its framers, announces the generous disinterestedness which actuates its numerous members. That friendship is of a doubtful nature which has nothing more than words to recommend it; actions alone can prove it genuine. Whilst the smiles of prosperity beam upon us, gladdening our course on our voyage through life; whilst every thing around us breathes of comfort, peace and happiness; whilst every breeze whispers new delight, brings fresh enjoyment, we are surrounded by a flattering host, profusely prodigal in expressions of their esteem and regard and friendship for us. But when the furious gales of adversity assail us, when the cold chilling blasts of poverty howl around our dwellings, in which a little time previous peace and happiness and plenty resided, where are then our former professed friends? All have disappeared; and our only companions are poverty and wretchedness. Alas, my Christian friends, it but too often happens that friendship's aid is most denied when wanted most! Comfort offered in the severe hour of trial, assistance granted in the pressing time of need, can alone prove friendship real. Such is the object of our Society, to speak the words of soft and gentle comfort to the dejected poor man's heart, and to administer to his necessities. An object, upon which the God of all comfort, of love and charity, must from his high throne in heaven, surrounded by millions of angelic spirits breathing forth accents of the purest seraphic love, look down smilingly propitious. This divine being, whose very essence is love, who ardently loves the noblest work of his right hand, man; who has exerted his Omnipotence to make him happy here and happy hereafter, has stamped upon his soul at his creation the image of himself. As Almighty God then is all kindness and goodness, as he causes creation to teem with the rich abundance of his bounties, for the benefit and comfort of man, he never could have designed him whom he has fashioned after his own likeness, to be a narrow, contracted, selfish being. Man was created a social being, destined, according to the measure of the means with which his creator had blessed him, to aid and support

his fellow creature man. To render the fulfilment of this sacred social duty not only easy but delightful to us, it has pleased the all wise creator of us and all things, admirably to blend and harmonize together, in our very composition, feelings of a nature the most noble, the most exalted; of a texture the tenderest, the most exquisite. A man, whose soul is not yet hardened by avarice nor depraved by vice, cannot resist this divine impulse within him, his heart melts at the sight of human woe, and his hand is extended as it were by instinct to relieve the sufferer. But though a man with a well constructed heart can feel for all mankind, though he "rejoice with those that rejoice, and weep with those that weep," the afflictions of his own household, of those who are near and dear to him, distress him much more sensibly; and in granting immediate relief, the imperious voice of nature calls loudly upon him to yield them the preference. Nature, combined with habit, has implanted in all our breasts a cherished fondness for the land of our nativity. So many sweet endearing ideas, so many delightful associations fill the soul when it reverts back to the earliest spot of its earthly existence, that it is next to an impossibility not to feel a veneration towards it. We know, my friends, that there are monsters in human shape, men they deserve not to be called, who, destitute of every feeling which dignifies and ennobles human nature, have devoted their little sordid minds to the gratification of selfish passion, have sacrificed their early friends, renounced their country, and denied their name. But whatever may be said of other countries, to the glory of Ireland, to the honor of Irishmen be it said, that this term of reproach, this stigma of character cannot be attached to the name. The love of Ireland and of every thing connected with Ireland's best interests, is deeply engraven upon the fond, the doating heart of an Irishman. He loves his country with a peculiar characteristic ardor not to be found in the natives of other countries. Whether an exile upon the banks of the rapidly flowing Ister, whither persecuting tyranny has driven him; or seated by the soft and smoothly flowing luxuriant Ganges; or

exposed to the tropical beams of a scorching African sun upon the sable Niger; or roaming disconsolate in the wild inhospitable forests of Amazonia; the tender emotions of his heart are borne away on the swift wings of fancy to that gem of the ocean, his own Emerald Isle, and he weeps over her whilst he mourns his own unhappy lot. Like the captive Israelites upon the rivers of Babylon, "*where they sat and wept when they remembered Zion,*" does he sit and weep when he thinks of Ireland. Her past glories flash upon his view; her golden days, the memory of which has been transmitted to him from his forefathers, rush upon his recollection. He thinks of the times when Ireland was free; when she was acknowledged to be the queen of western Europe, in science, in arts, and in literature; when every country paid homage to her genius; when she sent forth professors in every liberal art, to the different nations of Europe, to humanize and instruct their inhabitants. Whilst he in rapture views her in her rapid advances to perfection, suddenly her evil star appears blighting with its baneful, deadly influence her best energies. By the evil star of Ireland which appears to the warm imagination of the poor exile, is personified, as you may have already anticipated, the invasion of England's king. From that disastrous period does Ireland date all her misfortunes. From that period has she been fettered with the clanking manacles of slavery. Bigotry and tyranny, two of the great enemies of the human race, have been leagued, have conspired together to extinguish every spark of native genius, to complete the oppression of this most favored island. But their combined efforts have been vain, have been futile. The fire of Irish genius could not be smothered, it burst irresistibly forth into a magnificent blaze of splendor, which, whilst it illumined, astonished the world. Where is the country which can boast of characters equal to what Ireland has produced during even her days of servitude, whilst the exertion of native intellect was by a bigotted government systematically opposed? Ireland ranks foremost among the nations of the earth for her bards, her orators, and her statesmen.

The most ardent imagination, the sublimest flights of poetry characterized Ireland's ancient bards; for then free, then unfettered, they sat upon the mountain's top, breathing the pure air of liberty, tuning their harps to the enchanting song of freedom. But their song has ceased: the lamentation of the captive Israelites may very justly be applied to them. "*On the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our harps. For there they that led us into captivity required of us the words of songs. And they that carried us away said: sing ye to us a hymn of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the song of the Lord in a strange land?*" Ireland's harp should now only vibrate notes of the deepest woe; the songs of her bards should be the songs of sorrow. The power of her orators' eloquence should only be exerted to describe in language of fire her wrongs; and her statesman's wisdom, to redress them.

It is truly afflicting to humanity to reflect upon the scenes of misery and distress with which the restrictive persecuting system followed by England, has covered the once fair face of Ireland. Ireland may be justly called the land of bondage, the land of slavery and persecution. Her people loaded with heavy taxes for the support of what they have just reason to call a corrupt administration, and in return for this support their civil rights denied them. The rapacious avarice of the underlings of power, the petty tyrants of the soil, grinds down the poor industrious peasant to the earth; and whilst he has hardly sufficient wherewith to support his poor family, the tithe proctor comes and seizes upon the rest. The cruel penal code obliges him to support the establishment of a church to which he does not belong, whilst his own ministers have to live upon casual charity. In this state of the vilest, most unprincipled, most barbarous oppression, were the poor man to utter a murmur of complaint, or incur even the suspicion of dissatisfaction, a band of the most infamous abandoned wretches, sanctioned, and hired, (as it has been averred) by government, rush into his poor cottage during the dark and solemn hours of night, and assassinate him without resistance, plunging indiscriminately their

murderous weapons into the hearts of his sweet little ones, as they lie reposed in the arms of sleep and innocence—and the morning's dawn finds his cottage a smoking ruin. Can it be wondered at that men should flee from such grinding oppression, such bloody tyranny, such murderous persecution as this? I believe, my Christian friends, that I have not exaggerated the picture of the poor man's sufferings; I believe the description to be literally true, and I appeal to those Irishmen who have been eye-witnesses to the oppression of their country for the truth of my statement. Let it not then be ever said in future, let not the insulting barbarous expression be used to an Irishman, "why did you not stay at home?" Home, my friends, is dear, very dear to us all. The poor Irishman wishes not to leave his home: the very thought of being exiled from the spot which gave him birth, from the home which the presence of his forefathers had sanctified, which recalls to his remembrance scenes upon which his fond heart loves to dwell, rends his inmost soul with anguish. His heart clings to his home—he loves his country; but he has ties, he has affections of a much stronger nature; he beholds the little darlings of his heart in a state of starvation, holding forth to him their little innocent hands, the tears rolling down their pallid countenances, petitioning him for bread, and he has no bread to give them. Is there any language to express such a parent's feelings? Is it then a wonder that he leaves his paternal home and becomes the exile of necessity? Yet when embarked with his poor family and bounding over the dark green waves of the ocean, he casts a "longing, lingering look behind;" and as the shores of his native Isle recede from his view, in the inspired language of holy David he exclaims, "*if ever I forget thee, thou land of my nativity, let my right hand be forgotten, let my tongue cleave to my jaws, when I shall cease to remember thee, O Erin.*" Pennyless and friendless, he lands his precious charge on the shores of free America, then clasping his hands together in holy gratitude to the Supreme Being who has preserved him, for a moment he feels supremely happy; for then, for the first time,

does he breathe the pure air of perfect freedom. But his children still cry for bread. That Almighty Being who first inspired him, as he did Abraham, to leave his native land and his parental dwelling, who has conducted him in safety across the perilous ocean, to the promised land flowing with milk and honey, has procured him a proper reception. He finds a body of his own countrymen linked together in the sweet bonds of charity, with open arms ready to receive him; and the overflowing fulness of his heart bursts forth in streams of gratitude. Where is the Irishman who has either seen or been made acquainted with the sufferings of his countrymen, who would not clasp the exile to his bosom, press him fondly to his heart, and relieve his necessities? There cannot be one that would not. The warmth of a true Irish heart admits of no time for reflection. He sees distress, he relieves it. But the generous disinterested character of an Irishman can best be described by native genius, glowing with native feeling. One of the first of Ireland's orators says of his own countrymen, that "the hospitality of an Irishman is not the running account of posted and ledgered courtesies, as in other countries; it springs like all his qualities, his faults, his virtues—directly from his heart." Ireland's hospitality is more simply, yet not less beautifully described by one of Ireland's sweetest poets. He seems, indeed, to have been describing himself, for a better, warmer heart, one more alive to the distresses of humanity, never beat in the breast of human being: his beautifully simple words are,

"Here to the houseless child of want,
My door is open still,
And though my portion is but scant,
I give it with good will."

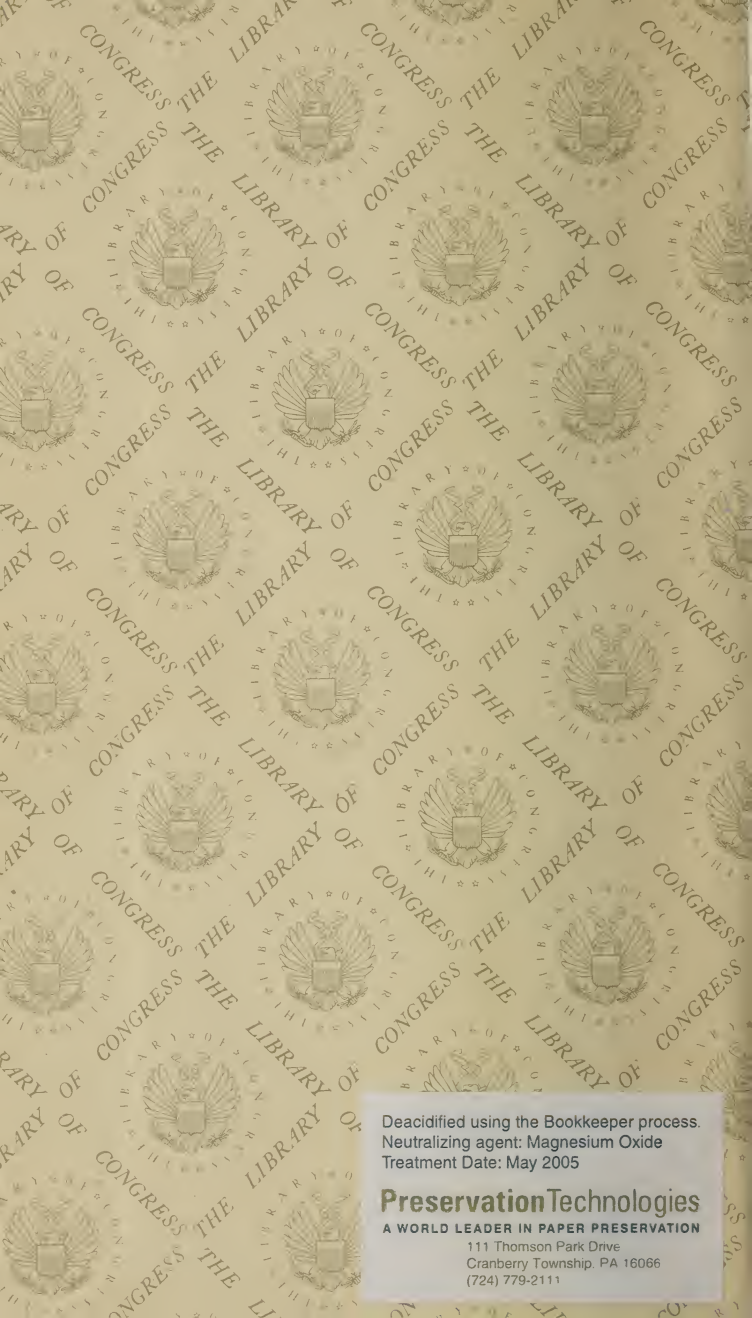
Let this be the motto of every Irishman, of every man belonging to our Society. Our individual means may be but small, but we can enhance the value of our little pittance by giving with it all our hearts. This will call down the blessing of the God of Charity upon it; stamp it with a value which will make it pass current in the treasury of heaven. One cent wrung from the miser's grasp would contaminate our funds. Let the heart

and the hand be united. The gift is stript of all its value when presented with reluctance; and the poor man who receives it, feels himself poorer than before. But thank God I have no apprehension whatever that this foul stain will ever mark the donations of this Society. Men of the most humane and charitable and liberal dispositions are entrusted with the disposal of our charities. I feel conscious, and the thought comforts me, that no poor worthy suffering emigrant, who may be cast upon our shores, will ever have in future to complain of a cold reception. It is a sweet thing, my friends, to afford the poor man relief, to make a fellow creature happy; yet sweeter still to know, that the cause of all his sufferings and his poverty has been removed. Soon, I firmly hope, that Ireland will become once more a free and a happy nation. There is at present every prospect. Her sons will not have to seek refuge in foreign countries; but every man may sit under his own vine in peace and plenty. Bigotry and tyranny are leaving the world together, and man, in all his native majesty, is asserting and vindicating his own unalienable rights, such as his creator bestowed upon him.

I feel that I have trespassed too long upon your patience, but I cannot conclude without expressing my heart-felt joy at the celebration of this festival. I see the most respectable characters before me of different denominations of Christians, nobly emulating each other, and uniting together in the holy cause of charity. This makes my heart bound with joy within me. May our union increase in strength and numbers. May God bless our every effort. May my text be verified. May I say with confidence to you *"Join with your piety brotherly love, and with brotherly love charity."* A blessing I pray God to bestow upon our Society, upon all who have heard me, in the name of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

THE END.

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